TELOS

Number 42 Winter 1979-80

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a quarterly journal of radical thought

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Subscription Rates

One year individual	$15.00	One year institutional	$25.00
Two year individual	$30.00	Two year institutional	$50.00

Available back issues: Nos. 13, 14, 17, 18, 20-41. Cost to individuals is $3 per copy for each issue prior to No. 35; $3.50 each for Nos. 35-39; and $4 each for No. 40 onward. Institutions pay $6 each for all back issues. Foreign orders must add 10% to cover additional postage charges. No checks drawn on Canadian banks can be accepted. Out-of-print issues may be obtained through University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 USA.

Telos is published in the Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. *Telos* No. 42 corresponds to Vol. 12, No. 4. Second-class postage paid at St. Louis, Missouri. Address all correspondence to:

TELOS
Sociology Department
Washington University
St. Louis, MO 63130 USA.

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ISSN 0090-6514

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INTRODUCTION

The 1970s have closed and the '80s opened in rotten fashion. The deaths of Georges Haupt, Herbert Marcuse, Peter Ludz, Hans Gerth and Nicos Poulantzas have not helped matters. Now the passing of Rudi Dutschke has made them worse. Activist-intellectual, he embodied the best of the New Left, including its best contradictions. Although he had no direct links to *Telos*, our own hopes are much diminished by his death. Many of the themes in his *Versuch, Lenin auf die Füsse zu Stellen* (1974), a wide-ranging and vigorous analysis of the Russian Revolution, Lenin and Lukacs, are part of what we can modestly call a common project. This herald of '68 is now one of its martyrs. The assassin's bullets fired into his brain in that year finally took their toll. He had kept the faith. At the time of his death, while holding a university position in Denmark, Dutschke had re-entered the German political scene as a key figure in the "Green Party." Working closely with Rudolf Bahro, he continued his critique of the doctrinaire Left while trying to move this significant ecology organization in an anti-capitalist direction. Those who knew Rudi Dutschke personally speak of his warmth and vitality, even amidst the arduous efforts at recovery from his wounds. Militance and a critical spirit do not always meet. In Rudi Dutschke they did. We should remember.

In this issue Zaslavsky, who already analyzed the underlying dynamics of the resurgence of the Stalin-cult in Russia in *Telos* 40, explains how social stability is negotiated between the regime and the working class. Changing conditions, however, threaten this stability; and Zaslavsky locates a number of potential problems likely to precipitate substantial changes in power relations. A related point is made by Mlynar's autobiographical account of the negotiations that took place in Moscow in August 1968 between the Russians and the Czech leaders who had sought a "New Course" during the Prague Spring. The exchanges between Brezhnev and Dubcek, more than anything else, show the conservative nature of the present leadership and the extent to which it has lost all pretense of adhering to any goals beyond those of a repressive bureaucratic collectivist regime concerned solely with reproducing or improving established relations of domination — both internally and externally.

Of course, the crisis of the Left is not a phenomenon limited to Eastern Europe. It engulfs even countries with relatively sophisticated and well-established leftist organizations, such as Italy. In the wake of recent electoral set-backs and efforts from within (primarily by Amendola) to mitigate some of the more glaring internal contradictions by verring even more sharply toward the right, the problems are as serious as ever. Colletti briefly outlines the ideological and organizational structure of the Italian Communist Party by indicating the conflicting political outlooks of the three main wings. In a more critical vein, Carlo reconstructs the role of the Italian Left over the last couple of decades, trying to locate in the rise of New Left parties such as the radicals a potential alternative to the present stasis.

This crisis of the Left is generalized by Feher to a broader crisis of Machiavellian politics. The old approaches are no longer adequate and any emancipatory politics will have to find a new means. Although it is not immediately obvious who it is that Feher is referring to as this new agency of political activity, the collapse of traditional politics will require substantial adjustments in the near future.

Reflecting on recent criticisms of Marxism, Clark points out how most of these are recycled versions of old anarchist objections to Marx dating back to Bakunin. Through a reconstruction of their major differences, Clark shows how, in retrospect, Bakunin has turned out to be right on most counts. Focusing on Marxist evaluations of the Marx-Hegel relation, Manville argues that the emphasis on merely methodological details has resulted in a systematic misunderstanding of the whole relation. By

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vindicating the anti-metaphysical thrust in Hegel, Manville locates the revolutionary kernel of Marxism in Hegel's break with the philosophical tradition and in the emphasis on the constitutive role of human activity.

Horkheimer's shift to Schopenhauer has been seen as a failure of nerve and a deterioration of critical theory. Through an examination of Horkheimer's reasons for emphasizing Schopenhauer as well as an evaluation of what this meant for critical theory, Raulet shows that the move entailed neither a failure of nerve nor a degradation of critical theory, but was an attempt to salvage an emancipatory dimension in a desperate situation.

Although 35 years have passed since the end of World War II and the Nazi regime, West Germany has yet to come to terms with its past. With the showing of *Holocaust* last year, a whole series of questions of responsibility, guilt and anti-Semitism finally became an issue of national debate. Several short notes in this issue attempt to provide an account of this debate — especially in terms of the continuity between the present regime and its Nazi past. Reviews dealing with Pannekoek, the neo-conservatives, the managerial revolution, the Asiatic mode of production, China, Shostakovich, bureaucracy and Althusser close out the issue.

Paul Breines and Paul Piccone

BOOKS FROM TELOS PRESS

FOR SOCIALISM by Gustav Landauer

INTRODUCTION by Tim Luke and Russell Berman

From his protest against Bebel's exclusion of the anarchists from the Second International in 1893 until his murder in 1919 by the reactionary troops suppression the Bavarian revolution, Landauer remained a tireless critic of all forms of bureaucratism and an advocate of a decentralized, libertarian socialism. A friend of Buber, Landauer had a great influence on the anarcho-socialist trends of the early Zionist movement and the development of the *Kibbutz*. Originally published in 1911, *For Socialism* is a critique of an official Marxism that had become an obstacle to emancipation.

Translated by David J. Parent Cloth: $12.00. Paper: $3.00

Pannekoek and the Workers' Councils

Edited by Serge Bricianer

Introduction by John Gerber. This collection of writings by Pannekoek presents for the first time in English many of his works, which, with their libertarian vision of socialism, have been routinely ignored in the official histories of European social democracy. Widely regarded as one of the most important founders of council communism, Pannekoek's work has only recently begun to receive the attention it deserves as a point of departure for the development of emancipatory yet practical social alternatives.

Cloth: $14.50. Paper: $4.00.

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THE REGIME AND THE WORKING CLASS IN THE U.S.S.R.

by Viktor Zaslavsky*

Why is there no workers' movement in the Soviet Union today? Why do Soviet workers practically never engage in organized actions? Some authors find easy answers to these questions in the theory of the terroristic totalitarian State, especially the analyses of Carl Friedrich, Zbigniew Brzezinski and Hannah Arendt.[1] As the theory states, the powerful repressive apparatus of the totalitarian State would nip any form of either real or potential workers' opposition in the bud.

Today, however, exclusive reliance on the totalitatarian State model amounts to a mechanistic transferral of features of Stalinism to Brezhnev's regime, an approach that ignores the enormous changes of the last 25 years. In Soviet history, the post-Stalinist period has been one of "peaceful" development, uninterrupted by wars, purges or revolutions either "from below" or "from above." During these years, the Soviet Union has been transformed into an advanced industrial society, but one quite different from the Western model. If the "inertia of fear"[2] still operates in this society and the repressive apparatus preserves significant power, these factors nevertheless function on a qualitatively different level than in the Stalinst era and certainly cannot explain the relative consensus emerging today in the relationship between the working class and the ruling apparatus.

Social Atomization

The problem must be stated in different terms. A direct consequence of Soviet ideological dictatorship and of the one-party system has been the atomization of society. All social activity remains the prerogative of the party or the state. No individual or group initiative in the political, economic or cultural spheres, nor any association among individuals can be tolerated if it finds expression without party-State mediation. For example, a group of painters attempting to organize an independent demonstration will be considered subversive, not so much for the "ideologically negative" influence that art might exercise over the people — the rulers are usually more pragmatic than painters and do not overestimate the potential of art — but because the regime aims at crippling the dangerous emergence of personal or group initiative as well as any form of solidarity among individuals.

The absence of organized workers' action in the USSR effectively demonstrates the persistence of social atomization. What mechanism ensures its

*This is a revised version of an article published in *Mondoperaio*, No. 6 (1978), pp. 74-83. Translated from the Italian by Eleni Mahaira-Odoni. The author would like to thank Juan Corradi and Volker Meja for their helpful comments.

1. H. Arendt, *The Origin of Totalitarianism* (London, 1951); C.J. Friedrich, Z. Brezezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956).
2. V. Turchin, *Inertsia strakha* (New York, 1977).

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perpetuation and what induces workers to give up organized action? These questions require a thorough, open-minded analysis of Soviet working class conditions in the post-Stalinist period.

In recent years Soviet sociology has brought to light the considerable heterogeneity of the Soviet working class. Social researchers have increasingly focused on the internal structure of the working class in studies of the various sources of recruitment, diverse employment categories in different sectors of industry, workers' stratification related to qualifications as well as the character of work.[3] Empirical data clearly demonstrate that these groups and strata are differentiated in terms of interests, motivations and behavioral patterns. Against the background of official rhetoric about growing social homogeneity and progress toward the final overcoming of all social differences, a contrary sociological thesis has recently acquired particular prominence, namely, that *intra*-class differences in the Soviet Union are becoming far more substantial that *inter*-class ones.[4]

For the purposes of this article, the Soviet working class may be divided into two large undifferentiated groups: the first is made up of workers with low- to medium-qualifications who are mainly adept at manual labor and who constituted about 79 percent of all workers by the mid-1970s; the second is formed of highly qualified workers who integrate manual with intellectual labor and who constituted the remaining 21 percent of the working class.[5] The two groups differ in many respects, including their attitudes toward the regime.

From Forced Labor to Voluntary Unemployment

In Soviet society, trade unions have no real power and, with rare exceptions, strikes do not occur. Nonetheless, one ought not to consider Soviet workers as deprived of rights, because Western criteria for trade union effectiveness are simply inapplicable to Soviet society. An essential feature of a centrally planned economy of the Soviet type, however, is the fundamental right of a worker to quit his job at will.

The extensive development of Soviet industry, combined with low labor productivity and poor work organization, generates a chronic labor shortage. Considering that in 1970 90 percent of the entire working-age population was already employed, it can be safely stated today that the USSR's labor power reserves have been practically exhausted. The Soviet Union is probably the only country in the world where, instead of unemployment subsidies, there is a law against "social parasitism," which makes it an offense not to work for more than three consecutive months.

Still, the right to quit one's job at will is a rather recent development in the Soviet Union. Immediately after the October Revolution, Bukharin claimed

3. O.I. Shkaratan, V.O. Rukavishnikov, "Sotsialnye sloi v klassovoi strukture sotsialisticheskogo obshchestva," *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya*, No. 2 (1977), pp. 62-73.

4. See, for example, *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 5 (1975), p. 24.

5. M.N. Rutkevich, "Dvizhenie sovetskogo naroda k sotsialnoi odnorodnosti," *Kommunist*, No. 7 (1977), p. 62.

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that a planned economy was making forced labor inevitable. Since free labor could not really fit into a planned, rationally organized economy, it should be replaced by a regime of obligatory labor and by state distribution of the work force.[6] But by definition, forced labor can exist only if there is a powerful repressive apparatus. The Soviet worker's right to freely choose his work was liquidated in 1940, only after the Stalinist regime had consolidated its coercive apparatus. The law of June 26, 1940, froze all workers in the jobs they occupied at the time. "Voluntary retirement from work" was prohibited as a criminal offense. Absenteeism from work for less than compelling reasons was to be punished by "corrective" labor. Late arrivals of over 20 minutes counted as a day's absence.[7] It took only a little more than 20 years to devolve from the October revolution, which declared factories to be the property of the workers, to Stalin's decree, which reduced workers to being the property of factories.

This system of forced labor lasted from 1940 to 1956. In the last years of Stalin's regime, terror as a method of government had already begun to threaten the very existence of the social system. The terror had also proven ineffective in the economic sphere since it destroyed nothing less than the human will to work. Therefore, Khrushchev's attempts to reduce the repressive apparatus and curb the political police, to rehabilitate surviving prisoners from labor camps and to abrogate the law prohibiting the voluntary change of one's place of work were reciprocally interdependent actions.

A year after the law was revoked, about half of all workers had changed jobs. The well-known phenomenon of labor turnover began then. Soviet statistics define it as the number of workers who quit their jobs voluntarily or who are dismissed by the administration for violations of the work rules. Since 1959, the annual rate of labor turnover has fluctuated between 19 percent and 22 percent. Moreover, as Murray Feshbach has pointed out, "these rates understate the actual rate of turnover because they exclude, by definition, certain 'acceptable' reasons for departure, such as being drafted into the armed forces, separation on old-age and disability pensions, and termination of temporary work assignments. Inclusion of these causes raises the turnover rate in industry by one-half, up to 30 percent annually."[8]

Under these circumstances, the worker's right to voluntarily quit his job represents a powerful means of pressure on the administration. As observed in a manuscript broadly distributed in the USSR through *samizdat*, the characteristic feature of the Soviet worker is his "awareness of his social role (being a worker) and the consciousness of the difference between his own interests and those of the plant's administration."[9] Within the Soviet

6. N.I. Bukharin, *Put k sotsializmu v Rossii. Izbrannye proizvedenya* (New York, 1967), pp. 117-118.

7. *Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR*, No. 52 (1940).

8. M. Feshbach, "Employment Trends and Policies in the USSR," *Il Politico*, No. 4 (1978), pp. 669-671; see also D.E. Powell, "Labor Turnover in the Soviet Union," *Slavic Review*, 36:2 (1977), pp. 268-285.

9. This essay was later published in Paris under the pseudonym of Bourgeoisdemov and under the title of *Ocherki rastushchei ideologii* (Paris, 1974), p. 168.

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economic system the firm director's salary and career depend on realizing the production plan assumed by the firm. Forced to meet the plan under conditions of chronic labor shortage, the administration tries any means to keep workers in its own employ. As a rule, the administration manages to win respect for its regulations and maintain the needed productivity by improving bonus systems or guaranteeing its workers better conditions of work than those in neighboring enterprises. Hence, there is a "spontaneous" increase in wages, thanks to the workers' legal right to move to the factory that pays them better.

Keeping this fundamental right involves a permanent struggle. Under Khrushchev the regime considered issuing "work passports" to limit labor's freedom of movement; but this initiative was not carried through. There have been similar attempts under Brezhnev. For example, in the early 1970s the job placement bureaus in various cities were given more control over new employment; all workers fired for an infraction of labor discipline are required to report to a special public commission on job placement for assignment to new jobs. Moreover, a 1974 provision stipulates that any worker who quits his job at his own request loses his right to cultivate the garden plot granted him by the factory — which is important for the family economy. Yet Soviet leadership avoids resorting to radical administrative measures. For instance, the attempts by some factory administrators to evict workers who have left their jobs voluntarily from apartments owned by the enterprises have not been supported by central authorities.[10] Therefore, the right to change jobs stays in force. Its elimination through administrative means could incite workers to decisive protests whose impact would be hard to evaluate.

The Rejection of Economic Reforms

In order to understand the sources of support for and satisfaction with the current regime on the part of unskilled and semi-skilled workers, let us go back to one of the most peculiar incidents in recent Soviet history — the 1960s economic reform. Initially the reform was presented to the population as a mechanism to revolutionize the Soviet economy. After several years, however, Soviet mass media stopped mentioning the reform in spite of the fact that the leadership which initiated it was and still is in power. Today economists explain the failure of the economic measures taken in Eastern Europe in the 1960s in terms of the inconsistency, inefficiency and conservatism of these reforms.[11] Without denying the importance of this economic explanation, one should also pay attention to the social impact of the Soviet reform, which was immediately felt and contributed significantly to its rejection.

The object of those reforms was to reduce the role of centralized planning and to strengthen the initiative of each individual enterprise by making economic efficiency (profitability) the criterion for the firm's proper

10. A. Katsenelinboigen, "Colored Markets in the Soviet Union," *Soviet Studies*, 29:1 (1977), p. 62; see also D. Novoplyansky, "Vokrug ordera," *Pravda*, Feb. 4, 1978.

11. W. Brus, "The Eastern European Reforms: What Happened to Them?" *Soviet Studies*, 31:2 (1979), pp. 257-267.

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functioning. Before the reform, the enterprise received a production plan, the financial means for paying workers and a work plan establishing the exact number of workers that *ought* to be employed by the enterprise. After the reform, while plans remained firm with respect to production volume and salary bases, single agencies could autonomously determine the number of workers and the amount of wages. Any money saved could be transferred in the form of production premiums to administrative personnel and to workers.

The "reformed" enterprises all behaved in the same fashion. They drastically reduced the number of workrs (at times as high as 50 percent), improved work organization and stimulated the economic interest of the remaining workers enough to realize the plan while achieving a considerable increase in labor productivity and reducing production costs. But the more "reformed" enterprises increased in number, the more pronounced became the social consequences of reform: in the first place the reform threatened two important social groups — the petty and middle bureaucracy and semi-skilled workers — whose status, privileges, way of life, or even very existence were endangered. The economic reform led to a situation where greater emphasis fell on the functions of technicians, engineers, and specialists whose competence together with their ability to exploit actual resources were becoming decisive factors for the successful operation of the enterprise. Control over production and distribution was beginning to change hands. The large intermediate bureaucracy of state and party which had held industry under its tutelage became useless and even harmful. In fact, it was an obstacle to the development of enterprises and it began to encounter growing opposition. Thus, it is not surprising that the party apparatchiks started to resist reform through all possible means, to the point of discrediting its most active supporters, some of whom were even imprisoned for "economic crimes."

But far more important was the strong opposition the reform encountered among semi-skilled workers. As a result of the reform, not only was a rapid economic stratification taking shape inside the working class, but the workers' right to quit their jobs at will was negated by the incipient unemployment and growing "reserve army" of labor. The social experience of the Soviet worker proves time and again that the individual's right to change his place of work at will is his only resource in the absence of the right to go on strike or to engage in collective bargaining. Under conditions of labor scarcity less qualified workers can maintain their long-run security, fight for individual wage increases and achieve them. A Soviet author gives us an account of a typical work situation in some parts of the construction industry: "The amount of completed work reported is greatly in excess of what has actually been done; the cost of materials is set at a level almost two times higher than the state prices; the workers receive twice as much as they should [according to established norms of productivity]; and there even appear 'dead souls'[12] who

12. This term, taken from Gogol's novel, designates in the contemporary Soviet usage workers who exist only on the payroll and appear twice a month to collect their checks.

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regularly receive their wages."[13] The situation is by no means confined to the construction industry. The picture is very far from the ideals of the Protestant work ethic or from the technocrat's ideal of a permanent increase in labor productivity, but it is equally far from the image of a Soviet working class deprived of any rights.

In the present context of social atomization and work alienation such conditions of work correspond to the life ideals of certain strata of workers, first of all, the less-educated and the less-qualified. No wonder that they gave a hostile reception to the technocratic economic reforms and resisted them with intentional work slowdowns, failures to achieve stipulated norms of production and, in some cases, open refusal to work or even industrial sabotage.

Consequently, on the basis of their common interests, the intermediate bureaucracy and workers of low- to medium-qualification forged a kind of social bloc whose pressure tactics contributed to the interruption of the economic reform by the early 1970s. As a result, the legitimacy and stability of Brezhnev's regime were reinforced since the leadership had protected not only the interests of the party bureaucracy but of many workers as well. To the worker, the regime actually emerged as his defender against the arbitrariness of local administrators, the danger of a new technology and the threat of a reorganization of production process, which meant unemployment and the need for a tiresome retraining. Until now the Soviet workers, especially those who lived in the "closed" cities (where special permission to reside is required) can wrest certain concessions from the factory administrations by quitting their jobs at will or simply by threatening to do so. It is difficult to expect workers to resort to collective initiatives, when the individual action proves at least partially effective, when the repressive apparatus remains quite powerful and the "inertia of fear" is still strong.

The Great Illusion

The consensus favoring the existing order among the low- to medium-qualified workers is tied to another factor. Social atomization inevitably leads to a situation where private material consumption is the major source of individual satisfaction. Therefore, expanding the production of goods and services becomes a crucial factor for the system's political stability.

Beginning with Stalin, the Soviet citizen, though totally excluded from any form of decision-making power and subject to extremely harsh material deprivations because of forced industrialization and the terror, could still expect a better tomorrow — with a good dose of faith. This constant expectation of improvement, as Walter Connor aptly defined it, is one of the

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Administrations "hire" these ghost workers because they may often need to fill employment quotas regardless of technical and-or economic need. The system also serves to increase the cash flow from the state budget and to distribute it between workers and managers.

13. *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, Sept. 13, 1978, p. 12.

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key elements in the political culture of the Soviet people.[14] Expectation is strengthened by the inertia of ideology and by imposing documents such as the current CPSU program, which promises the advent of full equality and economic well being — i.e., of communism — no later than 1980. Thus, the Soviet citizen greets any event that might worsen his material conditions with profound disappointment. Any reduction in his present standards produces an immediate upsurge in solidarity and the possibility of collective action. For example, Khrushchev's 1962 decision to increase the price of foodstuffs led to workers' agitation and, later, to the Novocherkassk revolt; far more eloquent was the case of Poland, where an analogous situation led to the fall of the Gomulka government and afterward to recurrent worker unrest.

Therefore, if we exclude resorting to terror, Soviet rulers can maintain the regime's stability and preserve the social atomization of the working class only by guaranteeing a constant improvement, however slow, in the quality of life. At first glance this seems like an easy objective to attain. Some scholars, stressing what they see as the modest and manipulated needs of the Soviet population, believe that the control of needs is the key to the regime's stability.[15] In reality, things are less simple. After the economic reform was suspended, the rates of economic growth and increasing productivity showed a sharp decline. In the USSR a form of hidden inflation also is caused by a spontaneous increase in wages that is not accompanied by a corresponding incresae in available consumer goods. The leadership is forced to maintain stable prices for the basic necessities, which have not changed in 15 years, and confront the perennial housing crisis by keeping rents at 1928 levels, despite the massive drain in the national budget from military expenditures and the repeated failures in the agricultural sector.

Alcoholism as a Means of Government

At this point an ancient expedient has come to the regime's rescue: the state's vodka monopoly. In his time, Stalin had to present the vodka monopoly as a temporary and unavoidable measure for "procuring the necessary means to develop industry through our own efforts and thus avoid the foreign yoke."[16] This "temporary" measure has become one of the most stable of all Soviet institutions. Vodka is the only commodity that can be found any day, in any quantity and any place in the country; according to some data, 70 percent of goods transported to the far northern cities is made up of alcohol products; a citizen risks not being served at a restaurant unless he orders vodka or cognac. By stimulating private consumption while unable to produce sufficient quantities of goods, the regime finds a way out in the development of an "illusory consumer good." Hence, alcoholism in the USSR has become an indispensable element of the Soviet way of life. Today, vodka

14. W. Connor, "Generations and Politics in the USSR," *Problems of Communism*, No. 5 (1975), pp. 20-31.

15. P. Hollander, *Soviet and American Societies: A Comparison* (New York, 1973), pp. 388-392.

16. I.V. Stalin, *Sochineniya*, Vol. 10 (Moscow, 1949), p. 232.

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is truly the country's No. 1 commodity.[17]

In 1927, the consumption of vodka and *samogon* — the home-made kind — annually averaged 6 litres per capita; in 1960, according to data from the Moscow area, it had reached 23 litres.[18] A study in another city from the same region verified that the average resident spends 105 rubles per year for state-produced vodka (compared to just over 4 rubles for books), which is equivalent to an overall per capita consumption of 30 to 36 litres of alcohol per year. These data suggest that individual consumption of vodka has increased at least 5 to 6 times over a span of 40 years. The USSR today has probably the highest hard-liquor consumption per resident of any country in the world.[19]

As a result, many lower-echelon workers do not gain much from wage increases. They practically work for vodka, the production of which costs the state a few cents, even though it sells steadily at high prices. One of the less timid Soviet publications cites among the principal causes of drunkenness the "psychological and material leveling of work, the monotony of daily life and the high wages of the low-qualified industrial labor force."[20]

This policy naturally ends up in a vicious circle: the sale of vodka must compensate for the lack of other necessary goods; but the ensuing violations in work discipline, absenteeism, the low quality of production and delinquency cause, in turn, a subsequent decline in productivity and a scarcity of many consumption items. Periodically, the CPSU Central Committee approves resolutions on the need for fighting alcoholism, while the press keeps publishing the latest research data (one of the studies, for example, shows that 50 percent of Moscow's salespersons are drunk on the job)[21] and invites the public to combat alcoholism. With some sense of irony, *Komsomolskaya Pravda* finds an "extraordinary social paradox" in a situation where on the one hand, the State struggles against drunkenness and, on the other, "it produces unlimited quantities of alcohol and tries everything to deliver it."[22] If attempts to reduce the consequences of drunkenness are not very effective, the fight against its causes would require major modifications in Soviet society together with decisive democratization and the opportunity for citizens to demonstrate a spirit of initiative and creativity.

Hence, alcoholism is an important prop for preserving the status quo. Drunkenness guarantees a certain degree of satisfaction among some sectors of the population (especially for unskilled workers and peasants) as it lowers

17. A. Krasikov, "Vodka: Commodity Number One," in R. Medvedev, ed., *The Samizdat Register* (London, 1977).

18. S.G. Strumilin, M. Ya Sonin, "Alkogolnye poteri i borba s nimi," *Ekonomika i organizatsiya promyshlennogo proizvodstva,* No. 4 (1974), p. 37.

19. V. Treml, "Production and Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages in the USSR: A Statistical Study," *Journal of Studies in Alcohol,* March 1975, pp. 285-320.

20. "Ekonomika i alkogolizm," *Ekonomika i organizatskya promyshlennogo proizvodstva,* No. 4 (1974), pp. 35-68.

21. *Literaturnaya Gazeta,* July 27, 1977.

22. *Komsomolskaya pravda,* July 24, 1971; see also V. Dorofeev, "Chas volka," *Literaturnaya Gazeta,* Oct. 31, 1979.

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the level of their spiritual needs and of needs in general. Indeed, the majority of the population does not realize that drunkenness is the result of a specific state policy and that, as a rule, the individual has no alternative mode of behavior. At the same time, by encouraging alcoholism, the state continues to concentrate resources in heavy industry, armaments and space programs. In turn, these sectors have an important function in neutralizing discontent among highly skilled workers.

Discontent among Skilled Workers

Soviet literature in the 1960s presented better skilled and better educated workers as more satisfied with their lot, more favored by the present Soviet regime and, therefore, more inclined to support it than others.[23] Summarizing the findings of Soviet sociologists in the 1960s, Merwyn Matthews comes to the conclusion that "it would probably not be unfair to think of the top layer of the working class as a latter-day Soviet version of Lenin's 'pro-capitalist' workers, that is, those who benefited most from the existing order, and were most anxious to sustain it."[24] In the 1970s, however, Soviet sociologists started differentiating more rigorously between the character of work with corresponding satisfaction with work, on the one hand, and socio-economic conditions of work determined by political power, on the other. For example, Ovshii Shkaratan and his collaborators introduced the notion of "socio-economic evlauation of the worker" based on the combination of two indices: workers' wages and housing conditions.[25] The socio-economic evaluation of the worker contributes decisively to his general level of satisfaction. This approach allows us to understand that, in effect, higher-echelon workers have valid reasons for being dissatisfied with their situation and with the country's economic development. Under the existing pay system the differences between wages of unskilled and skilled workers do not correspond any longer to the differences in qualification among the respective groups. This situation results not so much from the imperfect wage system as from the more limited use that skilled workers make of the right to voluntarily quit their jobs as a weapon against the administration. These workers are quite often so highly specialized that changing enterprises entails at least a temporary drop in their salary and qualifications. The higher cultural level and more developed needs of these workers also make them less inclined to look for satisfaction in alcohol — that "illusory consumption" so widespread among other workers. Skilled workers are dissatisfied above all with their housing conditions and with the slow-down they experience in upward social mobility.

For example, with regard to the housing problem one need not confine oneself to a visitor's tour of Moscow's new neighborhoods or to official data

23. A.G. Zdravomyslov, V.P. Rozhin, V.A. Iadov, *Man and His Work*, trans.S.P. Dunn (White Plains, N.Y., 1970).

24. M. Matthews, *Class and Society in Soviet Russia* (London, 1972), p. 141.

25. O.I. Shkaratan, "Problemy sotsialnoi struktury sovetskogo goroda," *Filosofskie nauki*, No. 5 (1970); O.I. Shkaratan, V.O. Rukavishnikov, *op.cit.*

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on the millions of apartments projected by the latest five-year plan. The magnitude of figures must not preclude one from examining concrete facts. Compared to the 1975 official "rational norm" of 19 square meters of habitable area per capita, the urban population of the Chita region was only given 6.6 square meters and the Irkutsk region 7.7 square meters. Data for the 1970s on the housing situation in a typical middle-sized city like Kostroma, which is near Moscow and not in Siberia, show housing conditions for workers as follows:[26]

Living in:	Workers	Employees
One-family apartment	15.5%	25.2%
3 or more room, one-family house	3.1%	6.2%
1- to 2-room, one-family house	19.1%	15.8%
2 or more room in shared apartment	10.3%	18.4%
1 room in shared apartment	30.4%	22.5%
One bed in a workers' dormitory	17.8%	0.2%
One room or bed-sitting rental	3.8%	3.5%

Thus, in communal apartments up to 10 or 15 families share the same kitchen and service areas, while the term "one-room house" is a euphemism for a hut. Moreover, as a well-known Soviet sociologist observes, "much urban construction lacks sewers and water pipes, gas, central heating, etc."[27]

Conquering space cannot compensate for the worker's dissatisfaction over sharing an apartment with strangers or lacking bathroom facilities, running water, gas or heating in a climate that is often harsh. Several studies show that skilled workers do not enjoy better living conditions. On the contrary, the spreading practice of assigning apartments to workers adept at manual, heavy and menial labor without regard for waiting lists, in the end, worsens the condition of skilled workers who feel underpaid and inadequately rewarded for their special efforts and qualifications.

The Decline in Social Mobility

In approaching this problem, David Lane distinguishes between a "structural" and an "exchange" type of mobility. The former occurs when the number of administrative and prestige positions in society increases, thus causing an influx of "new" elements that belong to hitherto excluded social strata; the latter occurs when the number of positions stays the same but the social origin of persons occupying it changes.[28] Decreasing structural mobility results from the end of Soviet industry's extensive development period, which derives in turn from the exhaustion of Soviet labor reserves.[29] As for exchange

26. B.M. Levin, *Sotsialno-ekonomicheskie potrebnosti: zakonomernost formirovaniya i razvitia* (Moscow, 1974), p. 239.

27. A.G. Zdravomyslov, *Zhiznennye potrebnosti trudyashchikhsya i ich udovletvorenie v usloviyakh razvitogo sotsializma* (Moscow, 1977), p. 38.

28. D. Lane, *The Socialist Industrial State. Towards a Political Sociology of State Socialism* (London, 1976), pp. 198-199.

29. *Planovoe Khozyaistvo*, No. 11 (1973), p. 17.

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mobility, in the last 15 to 20 years there has been an intense consolidation process in the Soviet class structure. Extensive research shows that class membership has become increasingly hereditary, and that specialists' groups and party bureaucracy tend to reproduce themselves.[30] The situation is especially pronounced in many Soviet republics where the cadres of the national intelligentsia have perpetuated themselves through self-recruitment and "only to a very insignificant extent are drawn from the working class."[31]

The basic mechanism of social mobility in the USSR is higher education. Admission to universities through competitive exams offers substantial advantages for applicants coming from families of specialists and the party bureaucracy. Their selection is favored by a growing system of special schools and the spreading practice of assigning university candidates to very qualified and expensive private instructors.[32] Characteristically, while in the middle of the 1960s almost 90 percent of high school graduates from working class families wished to enter the university, in the middle of the 1970s their number had dropped to almost one third.[33] As to youths from party bureaucratic or specialist backgrounds, in the mid-1970s — as in the mid-1960s — more than 90 percent of these school graduates are firmly determined to enter the university. The change in life plans among the children of workers is caused to a significant extent by their realistic assessment of their chances for university admission.[34]

The Military Industry and "Closed" Enterprises

Suspending the reform drive in the late 1960s was a hard blow to skilled workers who, together with the specialists, had a large stake in both continued technological progress and economic liberalization. In effect, higher-echelon workers obtained salary increases, foresaw the possibility for rapid improvement in their living conditions and were not really concerned with unemployment. In Soviet society continued stability will depend on whether or not the leadership will be able to attract the support of this important social group and-or neutralize its discontent.

The role of the workers' stratum employed in the more advanced sectors of industry has been analyzed by Serge Mallet and other scholars who showed how the massive concentration of skilled workers in the most advanced branches of industry and their organization strengthen their striving for self-management, for workers' control over production, employment,

30. Bourgeoisdemov, *op.cit.*; Z. Katz, *Patterns of Social Mobility in the USSR* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972); H. Seibel, "Problemlage und Schichtungsystem in der Sowjetunion," *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, No. 2 (1976), pp. 212-238.

31. M.I. Kulichenko, "Natsionalnoe i internationsionalnoe v zrelom sotsialisticheskom obshchestve," *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 5 (1979), p. 54.

32. A. Katsenelinboigen, *Studies in Soviet Economic Planning* (White Plains, N.Y., 1978), pp. 181-182.

33. F. Filippov, "Vseobshchee srednee obrazovanie kak faktor sotsialnogo sblizheniya goroda i derevni," *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya*, No. 3 (1976); F. Filippov, *Vseobshchee srednee obrazovanie v SSSR. Sotsiologicheskie problemy* (Moscow, 1976).

34. V. Zaslavsky, "Entrenched Socioeconomic Inequality and Changes in Soviet Ideology," *Theory and Society* (forthcoming).

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organization of the work process, thereby determining the success of the entire workers' movement.[35] Under the present conditions, the ability of the Soviet working class to oppose atomization also depends primarily on the skilled workers, especially those employed in advanced industrial sectors equipped with modern technology and advanced methods of organization of the work process.

Consequently, the regime has been elaborating atomization tactics that undoubtedly represent the latest step in the struggle of bureaucracy against the workers' movement. The distinction between normal and "closed" (i.e., special status) enterprises or industrial sectors in the Soviet Union has evolved into a fundamental cleavage corresponding roughly to a subdivision between advanced industrial and traditional sectors. The "closed" enterprises are primarily connected with military industry and are bound by State rules of secrecy. Yet, the concept of a State secret has undergone considerable dilution and today is applied not only to the armament and space industries, but also to industries that simply use more modern plants and an advanced technology.[36]

For the worker employment in a "closed" enterprise means at least three things. First, wages are significantly higher, vacations are better organized and the enterprise often supplies workers with housing units and gardening plots. Second, these enterprises employ very modern techniques and machinery that require a more creative and a better qualified type of work. Third, these enterprises are given special status and are officially called "regime enterprises" because work conditions in them are different and resemble those in war time.[37] Upon being hired, the worker is subjected to a special security clearance procedure (*zasekrechivanie* or "acceptance of secrecy") including a formal obligation "not to divulge state secrets" and "not to come into contact with foreign citizens." In practical terms, the worker becomes subject to continuous and severe control and is deprived of the right to change jobs voluntarily. Moreover, any attempt on his part to participate in organized action would be judged by a military tribunal. The worker becomes responsible not just for his own political behavior but for the discipline of his close relatives as well. If any of them should prove to be "ideologically unstable elements," the worker will be fired.

Nonetheless, the advantages of working in a special status enterprise are clearly greater than the disadvantages; hence, competition is very strong. Many skilled workers accept jobs well below their potential and qualifications

35. S. Mallet, "Socialism and the New Working Class," *International Socialist Journal*, No. 2 (1965), pp. 152-172; S. Mallet, *Essays on the New Working Class* (St. Louis, 1975); J.-R. Tréanton, "Progrès des études empiriques sur la classe ouvrière," *Revue française de Sociologie*, 16:3 (1975), pp. 335-358; A. Touraine, *La conscience ouvrière* (Paris, 1966).

36. Interesting information on the role of secrecy in Soviet science, which, according to Mark Popovsky, is "only a small part of the continent of the great Russian secrecy," can be found in M. Popovsky, *Manipulated Science* (London, 1978), pp. 101-131.

37. "Closed" enterprises have neither addresses nor names but are officially designated by P.O. box numbers. As a result, the expression "to work in a box" is widely used in contemporary Russian language. The term becomes more colorful when one takes into account the fact that "box" also means, colloquially, "coffin" or "grave."

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in order to work there, a situation that results in the overconcentration of a highly qualified work force in "closed" enterprises.

The policy of dividing Soviet industry into normal and "closed" parts has the following consequences. An artificial barrier is erected between the advanced and the traditional industrial sectors, with the consequent negative impact on the entire country's technological development. Progress in mechanization and automation is much slower in traditional "open" enterprises that continue to employ a larger number of unskilled manual workers. Characteristically, the amount of manual labor required by Soviet industry in the decade 1965-75 increased by 3.5 percent.[38] Then, the policy of "closed" enterprises entails the proliferation of statuses and an effective subdivision of the working class into more or less privileged categories. By joining privileged enterprises, skilled workers enjoy a certain margin of social mobility while falling at the same time under the elaborate control of the security apparatus. These workers cannot contribute to any kind of concerted action and are practically excluded as potential members of an organized workers' movement.

Incidentally, the Leninist concept of a "labor aristocracy" does not seem to apply to workers of these special status enterprises. Lenin was referring to a category of workers who received part of the surplus value created by the labor of less fortunate comrades. Today, workers in "closed" sectors are paid more or less for what they actually contribute and cannot be said to exploit the work of others. However, for the privilege of being paid more equitably, these workers voluntarily renounce collective action and consent to social atomization. The mass media contribute toward making this behavior "voluntary" by presenting the USSR as a besieged country, while speculating on the Chinese danger and touting defense work as the highest of honors for Soviet citizens.

Finally, a dangerous consequence of this policy of compartmentalization of Soviet industry is the reinforcement of chauvinistic tendencies in Soviet society and the increasing importance of its military-industrial complex. This development is also another major source of the gradual rebirth of the Stalin cult over the last decade.[39]

Squad Labor

The problem of highly qualified workers cannot be solved simply by developing military industry because today all sectors of the economy need this type of labor power. Hence, the regime insists on finding new forms of work organization that will permit both the administration and less skilled workers to control the work and salaries of more skilled ones. For instance, much current propaganda advocates the use of the so-called "squad method with pre-established objectives." Its principle is to unite workers of diverse

38. M. Ya. Sonin, "Effektivno ispolzovat trudovye rezervy," *Ekonomika i organizatsiya promyshlennogo proizvodstva,* No. 4 (1977), p. 5.

39. See V. Zaslavsky, "The Rebirth of the Stalin Cult in the USSR," *Telos,* No. 40 (Summer 1979).

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qualifications in a single squad where earnings do not depend on individual performance, but on the entire squad's completion of the goal. The system in many cases is directed against skilled workers, while the administration strengthens its hold over the entire body of workers. Characteristically, the term "stakhanovite" has practically been forgotten and yesterday's "stakhanovites" may be called today "individualists." In describing the new squads, the press uses the Leninist expression, "work discipline among comrades," which should regulate the squad's operation and not permit individuals to distinguish themselves from others. The recent resolution of the Central Committee "On the Improvement in Planning and Economic Mechanism" calls for abandoning "growth for growth's sake" as an approach and puts great stress on squad labor which "must become the dominant form of work organization and stimulation during the eleventh five-year plan."[40]

During the last several years some articles appeared in the Soviet press calling for the promotion of young and politically reliable workers into leading positions.[41] Some suggest a reduction in the importance of degrees for assuming directive functions; others propose favoring workers who take university entrance exams. An almost forgotten term, *vydvizhenchestvo* (i.e., extraordinary promotion of workers to directive jobs) has reappeared. But these are appeals made only on paper. In view of the serious overproduction of specialists with university degrees and the unprecedented stability and continuity of cadres in positions of power,[42] any concrete step towards the implementation of such proposals meets with extreme opposition both from specialists and from the party bureaucracy. In the blunt words of a Soviet journalist, "the times of extraordinary promotions are over; there are too many engineers by now."[43]

All these bureaucratic methods for achieving consent and neutralizing dissatisfaction among skilled workers have had only a partial success. The structural situation of the skilled workers' stratum in the Soviet economy does not allow many of them to accept the present leadership's policy of maintaining the status quo. As the idea of the construction of communism loses its validity and persuasiveness as the unifying social myth of Soviet society, skilled workers — together with some specialists and sectors of intelligentsia — constitute today the biggest force for potentially destabilizing the totalitarian system of Soviet "mature socialism."

What Prospects?

We can draw several conclusions from the foregoing discussion. (A) The absence of a developed workers' movement in the Soviet Union today cannot

40. *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, Sept. 5, 1979, p. 10; *Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta*, No. 32 (1979), p. 33.

41. *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya*, No. 3 (1976), p. 223; *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, No. 8 (1978); G.A. Kulagin, *Rabochii-upravlyaushchiiuchenyi* (Moscow, 1976).

42. R.E. Blackwell Jr., "Cadres Policy in the Brezhnev Era," *Problems of Communism*, No. 2 (1979), pp. 29-42.

43. A. Levikov, "Chelovek kotoryi upravlyaet," *Znamya*, No. 9 (1977), p. 193.

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be explained primarily in terms of massive terror. One should take into account that already by the beginning of the 1930s Soviet workers had lost the class consciousness and solidarity that they achieved in the pre-revolutionary period. "The nucleus of industrial workers surviving from the period before the revolution had been decimated and dispersed in the civil war, and never fully reconstituted.... Everywhere peasants and members of peasants' families formed an important element in the unskilled labor force in mines and factories and in the building industry."[44] During the Stalinist period, terror greatly atomized Soviet society and its colossal inertia can still be felt today in all spheres of Soviet life. Soviet workers — especially unskilled and semi-skilled ones, who lost the habit of political struggle or never tasted it in the first place — today *resign themselves voluntarily* to atomization, which allows them to pursue relative improvements in their living conditions through individual action. (B) Soviet rulers skillfully exploit and sometimes purposefully provoke the internal divisions and contradictory interests of the workers in such a way that the potential of skilled workers to become the organizers and leaders of concerted action is greatly reduced. The special-status enterprise system, which can also be defined as a system of "morbid repression," now produces a proliferation of statuses and serves as a shock absorber in dampening and containing workers' social energies. (C) The majority of the Soviet working class supports the present regime, which during the 1970s was able to maintain workers' job security and to ensure a slow but steady rise in the living standards of the population. Particularly by rejecting the economic reform of the 1960s and by not allowing massive layoffs and unemplyment, the leadership has defended the workers' basic socio-economic rights to full employment and voluntary mobility. If the regime would be able to continue the improvement, however slow, of the standard of living, the latter would remain a most important factor in preserving the regime's legitimacy. (D) The growth of private consumption has become another major factor in maintaining internal stability. The development of consumption, however, is stifled by traditional priorities in heavy industry and the growing military sector, by the fall in productivity due to the lack of incentives, by violations in work discipline, and by labor turnover.

What, then, are the prospects for developing a workers' movement within Soviet society? In the coming years the present equilibrium between workers' discontent and support may be seriously disrupted. By the 1980s the annual increase in the working population will decline further due to the falling birth rates of the 1960s. Therefore, Soviet economists predict a serious shortage of labor.[45] Based on these facts, the CIA has predicted an inevitable plunge in

44. E.H. Carr and R.W. Davies, *Foundations of a Planned Economy* (London, 1969), Vol. I, part 2, p. 455.

45. M. Ya. Sonin, *op.cit.*, pp. 3-12; V. Perevedentsev, "Demography: The Situation, the Problems, and Policy," *Soviet Law and Government*, 14:4 (1976), pp. 40-51.

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Soviet production in the 1980s.[46] This prognosis, however, neither takes into account the real growth of Soviet economy nor the experiences of the working class in the last decade. In all probability, the USSR will resume the 1960s type of economic reform since, by the 1930s, it will have become absolutely necessary. Actually, the Brezhnev government has just taken the first steps in this direction. A 1979 decree allowing many pensioners to continue their work while keeping the full amount of pension aims at offsetting the decline in the labor force. The new planning decree looks like a continuation of the 1965 economic reform. The decree is very self-contradictory and inconsistent, a fact that can largely be explained by the gerontocratic character of the present Soviet leadership. Nonetheless, it already indicates the direction in which the new political leadership will probably move.[47]

The return of the reforms will bring about a change in the main social groups supporting the regime. In contrast to the 1960s and 1970s, it is quite likely that during the 1980s the interests and needs of skilled workers will be furthered. At the same time, dissatisfaction among lower-echelon workers will be tempered by the receding danger of mass unemployment. There are already indications of a turn in this direction, though they are still theoretical. For example, a recent authoritative monograph on the "Soviet way of life" highlights the spreading practice of so-called "additional compensation" granted to anyone doing unpleasant and heavy manual labor. The authors recommend putting an end to wage increases, to unreserved access to apartments, to extra vacation time and other privileges for unskilled workers and urge instead the use of these resources for improving working conditions, by means of automation and mechanized labor.

Hence, there is good reason to expect that the working class will improve its position in Soviet society within the next decade. It remains to be seen, however, whether a better position will be "granted from above" by the ruling party apparatus that will thereby reserve the option to take it back at the first opportunity when things change again or whether a more radical social turn will take place in the direction of democratization and decentralization. In other words, will the USSR's present condition of social atomization be maintained? A realistic evaluation of today's Soviet economic and political situation can only answer in the affirmative. Nonetheless, we must keep in mind that one of the principal effects of recent political developments in the Soviet Union since the 1960s is the emergence of a political opposition, a Soviet democratic movement — weak, but nevertheless real. Should this movement join the working class in its economic and political struggle, the prospects for democratizing Soviet society will greatly improve.

46. *U.S. News and World Report*, Aug. 22, 1977, p. 21.
47. M.N. Rutkevich, ed., *Problemy sotsialisticheskogo obraza zhizni* (Moscow, 1977).

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FROM PRAGUE TO MOSCOW: AUGUST 1968

by Zdenek Mlynar*

On my way to Vysocany on the morning of Friday, August 23, 1968, I saw the people and the streets of occupied Prague in daylight for the first time. The route to the Contress took me through the main working-class districts of Prague — Karlin, Liben and on to Vysocany. There were fewer tanks and soldiers here than in the city center, but the picture these streets gave of the nationwide resistance to the occupation was more graphic and persuasive.

Everywhere, walls were covered with slogans and hand-painted posters. People were reading newspapers and leaflets being turned out by printing presses everywhere despite the efforts of the occyping forces to stop them. It was the picture of a city whose inhabitants were absolutely united in unarmed, passive resistance against alien interlopers. Flags and the Czechoslovak coat of arms decorated streets and shop windows and people were also wearing them in their lapels. Wherever anyone had fallen a victim to Soviet bullets there were improvised memorials, masses of flowers and state flags. Street signs had either been pulled down or given different names (most often then were renamed "Dubcek Street") and sometimes they were simply switched with others bearing the wrong names. Direction indicators at major intersections had been destroyed or turned in the wrong direction, and they were frequently painted over with various signs like "Moscva — 2000 km." Some buildings were pock-marked by gunfire and many shop windows were shattered, providing an opportunity in many cases to convert them into exhibitions of popular creativity that made very inventive propaganda against the occupation.

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*This essay is excerpted from *Nightfrost in Prague: The End of Humane Socialism*, translated by Paul Wilson and scheduled for release by Karz Publishers later this spring. The work, an autobiography of Mlynar's 25 years in the Czechoslovak Communist Party (CPCz), reflects the author's evolution from a faithful Stalinist to a reform communist and finally to his expulsion from the ranks of the party. Moreover, it is also an account of the emergence, development and eventual demise of the Dubcek regime and its "Prague Spring." Mlynar, as secretary to the CPCz Central Committee during the Dubcek era, had an excellent vantage point from which to observe the machinations of the party leadership. As Mlynar put it: "I experienced the 'Prague Spring' inside those structures of power." He not only details the history of the democratization, but also the rampant formalism, toadyism, careerism and betrayal he sees as characterizing the party. The vivid portrait rings of Marx's description of state bureaucracy — "*Spiritualism* becomes a crass *materialism*, the materialism of passive obedience, of faith in authority, of the *mechanism* of fixedly formal activity, fixed principles, views and traditions. For the individual bureaucrat, the state's purpose is his private purpose of *hunting for higher positions* and *making a career*."

Mlynar describes the activities of the party leadership and the functioning of its structure of

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Most of the slogans called for national sovereignty and demanded democratic socialism. There were quotations from Lenin, along with slogans such as "Lenin, awake! Brezhnev has gone mad!" The names of Dubcek and Svoboda were emblazoned in huge letters across walls and along fences on the city's outskirts and slogans expressing confidence in Dubcek, Svoboda, Smrkovsky and Cernik were all over. Signs like "Go back home" reflected the residue left by years of anti-American propaganda when the presence of the American army in Western Europe and elsewhere was explained as imperialist occupation. Thus, the old international slogan "Yankee go home" gave way to "Ivan go home," and signs like "USA in Vietnam, USSR in Czechoslovakia" appeared. The initials USSR were often written with two capital S's in the form of two bolts of lightning — the Nazi SS symbol. There were also hammer and sickles and swastikas separated by an equal sign. Typical, too, were anecdotes and cartoons ridiculing the occupation soldiers as misguided dolts.

These signs and slogans, and the groups of people engaged in discussion with the soldiers of their tanks, demonstrated the people's efforts to sway the occupational troops by argument. It was something that had not happened, nor could have, when Nazi armies arrived in March 1939. People were convinced that these Soviet "Ivans" were just exploited and misguided simpletons who had no idea of what they were doing — and they wanted to explain the situation to them. The nation had the same feeling that for me came from years as a communist among the ruling elite: a belief that perhaps it was, after all, just some kind of misunderstanding, that all this could simply not be true.

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domination at a time when many believed that reform communism was the answer to Stalinist formalism: that the bureaucracy could somehow be transformed into a substantively rational means for democratic, humanitarian reform of state socialism. The story ends in the evaporation of the fantasy into the spiritual gulag of the "total dictatorship."

This essay involves a fascinating episode from Mlynar's larger work, detailing the CPCz leadership's activities at the time of the 1968 Soviet military intervention and its "negotiations" with the Soviet Union to end the crisis. It provides a heretofore hidden history that only a member of the leadership could provide. Mlynar explains how at the Vysocany Congress the reform wing of the CPCz prevented a bureaucratic putsch by Stalinists and Soviet agents, aided by the lack of courage of their opponents. This faction sought to use the party apparatus to stage the internal coup ordered by the Kremlin. However, the actions of the party leadership asnd functionaries at the Congress, backed by overwhelming popular support expressed in unified peaceful resistance, frustrated Soviet desires for an easy and rapid takeover. The initial success turned to failure in the "negotiations" that followed. The most interesting and substantial part of the essay deals with the tension-charged interaction between the leadcership of the CPCz with its Soviet counterpart. It was this meeting that produced the infamous "Moscow Protocol" justifying the Soviet intervention and marking the beginning of the end of the reform movement. In short, it forced the reform leaders to endorse and then to participate in the decapitation of their own movement. Thus, the essay concerns the fundamental capitulation leading to "normalization" or more directly the restoration of the "total dictatorship." This inner history captures fully the tension, intrigue and most importantly the Soviets' careful staging of events so that capitulation could be the only outcome. Mlynar strips the interaction between the CPCz and the Soviet Union of ideological dress so that the play of naked power interests is absolutely clear. The essay is best portrayed in the author's own words: it is about "hostages in the hands of gangsters."

—*Robert J. Antonio*

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The new party presidium, elected at the extraordinary congress, had its headquarters inside the huge complex of factory buildings belonging to the CKD works in Vysocany. The approaches to its administrative offices were guarded by armed members of the People's Militia. I think the deliberation of the XIVth Congress of the CPCz on August 22, 1968, had an exceptionally important and positive influence on the course of events. It was largely due to this congress that the CPCz maintained its decisive political authority among a majority of the population. The congress took an unflinching stand that was appropriate to the situation. It took the very vague and generalized condemnation of the aggression issued by the Dubcek leadership on the night of August 21 and boiled it down into several simple, concrete political demands. Their chief demands were the departure of the troops, the return of all the public functionaries to their proper, constitutional positions, and the observance of all international legal norms, including the statutes of the Warsaw Pact itself. At the same time the XIVth Congress of the CPCz — clearly mindful of the 1956 Hungarian events — did not support demands for the withdrawal of Czechoslovakia from the Warsaw Pact or a declaration of neutrality. At the same time, the congress turned to the international communist movement with an appeal for help and very explicitly denied any competence to the pro-Moscow and conservative faction in the CPCz, none of whose members were appointed to any function in any of the bodies elected by the Congress. The stands taken by the National Front and the government, both of which publicly recognized the Vysocany Congress, created the impression that the CPCz was continuing to function as the ruling political force in the land, and was doing so in the spirit of the Prague Spring. For several days, the congress made it appear that the forces of reform communism had won an unequivocal political victory in a situation which, taken as a whole, meant their utter defeat.

All of this was exceptionally important not only in domestic political terms, but also in terms of the options open to Moscow. The XIVth Congress of the CPCz created an entirely unexpected and extremely difficult situation for the Moscow Politburo. For although the entire military operation against Czechoslovakia was conceived and planned in a very slip-shod fashion, with a maximum of demagoguery, Moscow did make a definite attempt to have the whole action appear politically legitimate. From what appeared in the Soviet press during the early days of the invasion, from what went on in the CPCz leadership from the 20th to the 22nd of August, and from other information that I subsequently had access to, the political plan for the intervention was the following:

A group of the leadership of the CPCz, chiefly consisting of Bil'ak, Indra, Kolder and Jakes but also including Svestka, Piller, Lenart, and Kapek (and which counted on the support of Rigo, Barbirek and perhaps even Volenik) promised the Kremlin that they would engineer a domestic political justification for legalizing the intervention. This group had its final preparatory meeting on the morning of August 20 in the office of Alois Indra in the Central Committee building. At the meeting of the Presidium of the

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Central Committee of the CPCz that began that afternoon at 2 o'clock, the first item on the agenda was to have been a discussion of proposals put forward by Indra and Kolder relating to a situational report submitted a week before by the information department of the Central Committee (headed by J. Kaspar) containing a mixture of objective and biased facts on the economic and political situation of the country. The proposals developed by Indra and Kolder on the basis of this report were intended to lend support to Moscow's arguments by making it appear that before the upcoming congress of the CPCz there was a real danger of open anti-socialist activity from "counter-revolutionary forces."

The group in league with Moscow was counting on swinging a majority of the Presidium behind Indra and Kolder's proposal. Piller, Barbirek, and Rigo were to cast the deciding votes. Although Piller and Barbirek subsequently did not vote in support of military intervention, according to the plan of the pro-Moscow group that was not the question to be voted on. If Indra and Kolder's proposals had been put to a vote, it is very likely that both those members of the presidium would have voted for them. This would have meant a majority of 6-5 against Dubcek. Of the candidate members, Lenart and Kapek would vote for the proposal, leaving only Simon to support Dubcek. Of the non-members of the Presidium in the party leadership, Indra, Jakes and perhaps Volenik would have sided with the pro-Moscow group, and Cisar, Sadovsky, Slavik and I would have supported Dubcek's group. Although this was a formal majority of 4-3 for Dubcek's supporters, the three pro-Moscow men in fact were in a stronger position in the apparatus than the majority of four: they controlled all departments directing internal party relations, and they ruled one of the strongest regions — Ostrava. Cisar and Slavik had the ideological sections, and Sadovsky the agricultural and economic administration inside the CPCz. The sections of the power structure I was in charge of were important in terms of party politics. Yet, if there were to be a putsch, the most crucial factor was the internal relations between their political cliques and not the Central Committee secretary who merely established the general line of their activities from the party's viewpoint.

Thus, given the balance of power in the 21-member leadership, the vote in the case of a conflict over Indra and Kolder's proposal could well have been 11-10 in favor of those proposals. The twelfth member of the leadership — Evzen Erben, who was a member of the secretariat of the Central Committee and a secretary of the National Front — was not, as far as I recall, present at that meeting. The question is whether this was purely by chance. In Erben's case, however, a leaning towards the conservatives could not be ruled out, although it is more likely he would have tried to remain neutral or support Dubcek.

Had Indra and Kolder's proposals been passed by a slender majority, it is probable that the majority would immediately have forced a discussion of Brezhnev's letter and later produced another letter requesting "fraternal assistance" from Moscow. It is also possible that a slender conservative majority might have tried to split the leadership in a debate over Brezhnev's

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letter, then contacted the Soviet agents in the state organs, people like Pavlovsky, Salgovic, Hoffman and perhaps several others (particularly in the army), and issued such a letter themselves, independently. Immediately after the arrival of the armies, a "revolutionary workers' and peasants' government" would be declared and its "revolutionary tribunal" would swing into action.

A Czech version of the unsigned letter published in *Pravda* on August 21, 1968, purporting to come from "party and government leaders" in the Central Committee of the CPCz, the parliament and the government, actually existed in Prague in those days. One copy was found in the office of Sulka, the director of the Czechoslovak Press Agency, who was also a Soviet agent. It too was unsigned. In my opinion no signatures existed, and for this reason they cannot be published even today. The second reason why the signatures could never be published — even if they existed — is because many of the most highly placed representatives of "normalization" from Husak and Strougal to Kempny and Colotka would not have been able to demonstrate any great merits at the time. On the other hand, many extreme Stalinists from the Novotny era who are now unpopular with the Husak regime *could*, but the Husak leadership had no interest in promoting them. The real reason why no concrete signatures exist on the letter, however, is because the whole plan to put together a new leadership along the lines of a "revolutionary workers' and peasants' government" collapsed. It was that new leadership that was supposed to sign the letter.

On the afternoon of August 20, the meeting of the Presidium began with a debate — and a very heated one at that — about the order of items on the agenda. In the end, proposals relating to the forthcoming congress were given priority to be followed by Indra's and Kolder's proposals. Dubcek himself insisted on this. I don't think he suspected any connection between those proposals and the intervention that began only a few hours later. It was more likely that he wanted to postpone the discussion of Brezhnev's letter until the end of the meeting, for he correctly sensed that it would provoke conflict in the leadership and he wanted to have the material for the congress approved before this happened. That the letter would relate to the proposals of Indra and Kolder was, of course, obvious.

Incredible as it may seem, it was bureaucratic procedural routine that stopped the first stage in the pro-Moscow group's attempt to take over. This can be explained by two circumstances: on the one hand, they were preparing a bureaucratic putsch — and this can find bureaucratic obstructions the most difficult to surmount — while on the other hand, the pro-Moscow group was genuinely terrified. Once the order of items on the agenda had been changed, the only way they could have succeeded would have been to come very resolutely out into the open and attempt to carry through their scheme without regard for the agenda. They might have succeeded, but only if their main representatives acted at once, without consulting the others. A minute or two elapsed and it was too late, because

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the meeting had already got down to business at hand. What the putschists lacked was the courage to carry it off.

There were other signs of this lack of resolution. One indication was Bil'ak's wild cry, "All right, lynch me!" on the night of August 20. Jan Svoboda, one of the people who was closest to Novotny and head of his secretariat for a time, once recounted, long after August, how a group of Stalinists and Soviet agents had met in Pecky near Nymburk before August 21 to work secretly on plans for the intervention. Representatives of the pro-Moscow group in the CPCz leadership were also to attend the meeting. Svoboda said they were all terribly afraid right up to the last minute, and in the end only Bil'ak showed up. He was so terrified by the whole thing he could hardly talk.

Thus, in the afternoon of August 20, 1968, plans to provide political backing for the invasion ran into problems. The stage managers, however, insisted on going ahead with them. Towards evening on August 22, they backfired for a second time at the Soviet Embassy in Prague. And one of the main causes of that failure was the XIVth Congress of the CPCz in Vysocany, which compelled the chief stage managers in Moscow to alter the plans and agree to negotiate. They exploited Ludvik Svoboda in this, but they were also compelled to accept as negotiating partners all those who were supposed to have been tried and sentenced by the "revolutionary tribunal": Dubcek, Smrkovsky, Cernik and the others.

All of these men were interned in KGB barracks in the Carpathian Mountains, but on the morning of Friday, August 23, Brezhnev telephoned Dubcek and subsequently Dubcek and Cernik were taken to Moscow. On the morning of August 25, the others who had been arrested (with the exception of Kriegel) joined them, and the delegation led by Ludvik Svoboda, along with the rump of the party leadership, were delivered to Moscow. I was also in this group. Moscow, compelled to negotiate, had no one else to negotiate with but the Dubcek leadership. Its agents had failed to carry off an internal putsch, and it was out of the question for Moscow to deal with the leadership elected by the XIVth Congress of the CPCz.

Despite the enormous importance the XIVth Congress had in developments after August 22, there were also serious political deficiencies from the outset, particularly in the new bodies elected by the Congress. The party leadership elected by the Vysocany Congress understood its own role as that of a provisional body, and it was received as such by the public. I doubt that it could have been any other way. Both the Congress and the bodies elected by it had to ratify in their functions all the leaders who had been arrested and taken out of the country: Dubcek, Cernik, Smrkovsky, Kriegel, Spacek and Simon, and therefore all these men were re-elected to the Presidium. Thus, those members of the new leadership who enjoyed the greatest authority were in fact not physically present, which meant that both the CPCz and the general public knew that there could be no lasting solution to the situation until the leaders returned.

The people who now held active functions in the party leadership —

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including Venek Silhan, who was standing in for Dubcek — had never been well known, either to the public or to the party, and they themselves were well aware that they were only an interim leadership. Thus, the XIVth Congress only apparently elected a new party leadership: in fact they merely threw their support behind the part of the Dubcek leadership that the intervention was meant to topple. The Vysocany Central Committee, practically speaking, left the fate of the reforms, the entire party and its own fate as well, to the Dubcek leadership, which was not only *not* at the Congress, but which was not even in Czechoslovakia. And when the Soviet Politbury began to negotiate with them, it was dealing with a group of people who, up until August 25, had no idea of what was happening in Czechoslovakia and what kind of bargaining position it was in.

The new Presidium elected in Vysocany was composed of 28 people. Eighteen of them had already been members of the Central Committees of the CPCz or the CPS (Communist Party of Slovakia), or had held high government functions (Husak and Colotka had been deputy premiers). Of the total membership of the Presidium, fifteen (i.e., more than half) were not present in Prague. In fact, practically all those with any kind of political authority were absent. Apart from the six arrested, they included Ota Sik, who was in Yugoslavia, Gustav Husak, who was in Moscow as a member of the government delegation, and Cestmir Cisar, who was hiding somewhere outside of Prague until August 26. In addition, the whole Slovak caucus was in Bratislava — Colotka, Zrak, Tazky, Pavlenda and others. Those members of the Vysocany Presidium who worked actively from August 23-26, that is, until the party leadership returned from Moscow, were for the most part functionaries from the various regions, districts and factories, or else they were from outside the party apparatus altogether and therefore did not have the necessary authority within it. The main support for the activity of the Vysocany Congress came from the apparatus of the Prague municipal committee of the CPCz and a portion of the apparatus of the Central Committee, but the latter was now being directed by Martin Vaculik, who had been a candidate member of the Politburo under Novotny and was not a member of the Vysocany Presidium. Though I was not a member of that Presidium either, I worked in Vysocany as a secretary of the Central Committee on August 23 and 24, dealing mostly with people who preferred working with someone who had already been a Central Committee secretary before the Vysocany Congress.

I think that the feeling of temporariness, the awareness that the Vysocany Congress could only bridge a gap of a few days until the main representatives of the party leadership returned to Prague, was shared by a great many of those working in Vysocany who were not elected delegates. The longer the provisional situation lasted and Svoboda and Dubcek had still not returned from Moscow, the greater was the uncertainty in Vysocany, and in some cases the nervousness and even the fear for the nation's fate and their own. The XIVth Congress was not and could not have been anything more than a temporary solution.

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In these provisional conditions, a large group — about 40-50 percent of the functionaries in the apparatus of the CPCz — took an active part in the business of the XIVth Congress, fully aware of the risks involved, and carried out the practical tasks laid out in the resolutions and directives passed by the elected organs of the Congress. Along with a large number of other functionaries who also supported the congress' line but were a little more circumspect about it because they assumed that the situation would change, these two groups together formed the vast majority — about 90 percent — of active members of the CPCz who opposed the aims of the occupiers, stood behind Dubcek and the arrested members of his leadership and were in no way willing to collaborate.

Only a very small number of functionaries and employees of the CPCz apparatus were willing to collaborate, calculating that the reforms would be definitely defeated and the total dictatorship restored. Until the party leadership returned from Moscow on August 27, however, many of them merely waited passively for the provisional state of affairs to come to an end, not daring to collaborate openly with the Soviet soldiers or make their opinions known in public. Only a few in the Central Committee apparatus — scarcely more than 20 from a staff of about 500 — continued to work in the occupied Central Committee building after August 22, where Kolder officiated in the name of the "party leadership." Kolder expressed his feelings very curtly when he telephoned to tell me I was to fly to Moscow with the rest of the leadership. When he was told that I was not home and that it was not known where I was, Kolder replied: "Not known? He's in Vysocany, where else would he be? Almost everyone's there, so what are they afraid of? I'm here all alone — I'm the one who should be afraid."

The main Soviet agents in the CPCz apparatus were in Dresden and Moscow working feverishly on the occupiers' propaganda campaign: the slander, lies and Stalinist cliches that were broadcast from the "Vltava" radio station, and printed in the newspaper *Zpravy*, the Soviet press and the press in the four other participating countries. But those agents did not have the courage to go on the air themselves, despite a desperate need for people who knew how to speak proper Czech; as it was, the announcers' Czech was very unpleasantly reminiscent of the people who addressed the Czech nation in March 1939 in a similar accent. One Czech, however, actually did speak on "Vltava" — Pavel Auersperg. I talked with him on August 31, 1968, at a session of the CPCz Central Committee after our return from Moscow, and Auersperg said very openly in his own defense: "They promised to change the modulation of my voice, and then the bastards didn't do it. Anybody could recognize my boozy voice, but what can I do about it now?"

But the decisive factor that made the political success of the XIVth Congress possible and which marred plans to make collaborationist changes in the structure of power was quite unequivocally the opposition of the entire nation to the Soviet military intervention. Here could be seen the fruits of the Prague Spring, which had grown from an experiment in political reform to a

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nationwide democratic and humanistic movement which, in the eyes of the nation, had become something that went beyond politics — something moral and human at the same time. The nationwide resistance to the intervention gave rise each day to thousands of concrete and extremely effective acts of passive resistance in the face of which the aggressor's machinery of violence stood helpless. And so the Soviet Politburo was soon faced with a question that became its fundamental problem: what next? It had the whole country under military control, but it was utterly helpless to prevent what was happening. And as long as a military power does not resort to acts of mass brutality, it can compel people to do very little. The radio went on broadcasting, the newspapers and leaflets continued to appear — and everything was directed against the occupiers. Moreover, the domestic organs of administration — from the national committees to the government itself — continued to function, nor did they submit to the occupation forces or even meet or negotiate with them at all. In everyday life, people behaved as though the government had not been overthrown, as though all this were only a temporary episode, after which life would return to normal again.

And so small a nation, invaded by an overwhelmingly superior force, won a brief political victory. The nation knew this, and was strengthened in its resistance. There was a fable that appeared somewhere in the press at the time about an elephant who couldn't crush a needle. It captured the situation in a way that favored the nation and created an insoluble problem for the occupiers, and from the other side as well: the elephant was, after all, rather large and he was here — and some kind of solution for the impasse had to be found. Certainly everyone was aware that passive resistance was an extraordinarily effective weapon, but they also knew that it was not and could not be a definitive solution. And both the nation, and the extraordinary congress of communists in Vysocany gave a mandate to seek that solution to a handful of people — Dubcek, Cernik, Svoboda and Smrkovsky — who were in Moscow.

The feeling of provisionality was part of the heroic atmosphere from the 21st to the 26th of August. It seeped through to the awareness of the occupiers and their leadership. With a feeling that I was destined to play an important role in the close of that provisional state, I prepared to go to Moscow on the evening of August 25th.

I went to Moscow on Dubcek's initiative, and I brought him the endorsement of the Vysocany Presidium. But I flew to Moscow with the rump of the old party leadership — Svestka, Lenart, Jakes, Barbirek and Rigo. Kolder remained in Prague in the occupied Central Committee building; Kapek was probably hiding somewhere outside Prague; Cisar, Sadovsky, Slavik, Erban and Volenik were not invited to Moscow and the remaining members of the Dubcek leadership were already in the Kremlin. Some of them had gone with Ludvik Svoboda, some had originally been captives who were carried off by force in a Soviet military aircraft and intered in police buildings in the Carpathians under the watchful eye of the KGB.

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We were flown from Prague in a military aircraft. We sat silently, for after all we had seen of each other's conduct in the last few days, there was nothing to say. About 9 a.m. Moscow time on Sunday, August 25, the aircraft touched down at the Vnukovo airport outside Moscow. We were taken in pompous Chayka limousines to some government villas in the Lenin Hills, only a few hundred meters away from the main building of Moscow University.

In the Kremlin they led us into a hall where we found Svoboda along with Cernik, once more in his capacity as premier, and Smrkovsky, Spacek and Simon. But Dubcek, Kriegel and Indra were missing. I wanted to talk with Dubcek first. Ludvik Svoboda told me he was resting and could not take part in the negotiations. Svoboda led me through two adjoining rooms, then opened a door and I saw Dubcek. He was lying in bed, naked to the waist, for it was hot and he had thrown off the covers. He simply lay there, and his face wore the absent expression of someone who had been drugged. When I entered the room, however, he stirred, opened his eyes, and smiled. I was suddenly reminded of traditional paintings of the martyrdom of St. Stephen, who smiled while being tortured. Dubcek had the same long-suffering expression on his face, and the folds of the pillow radiated outward from his head like rays from the missing halo. I walked over to him and stroked his face. I attempted to explain something to him, but he was in no fit state to talk about anything specific. I remained sitting on his bed for a while longer, and then left him.

Dubcek was in a state of utter nervous collapse. President Svoboda's personal doctor was looking after him. I did not talk to him again until the following day, just before we all went to join the official part of the negotiations, in which the notorious "Moscow protocol" was to be signed. During the preparation of the text of the protocol, Dubcek did not participate in any of our collective meetings and discussions.

Frantisek Kriegel did not take part in those negotiations either and in fact, was not even at the Kremlin. We learned the following day that the Soviet leadership had tried to keep Kriegel out of the negotiations altogether and ultimately, they even tried to prevent him from returning to Prague. I shall talk about this later.

Alois Indra was absent from the negotiations as well. He, too, was ill and was confined to bed somewhere outside the Kremlin, perhaps in a hospital. At the time it was said that he was suffering from Menier's disease, a very appropriate sickness because one of its symptoms is a loss of balance. Quite apart from the state of his health, Indra had every reason to be uncertain and he really did not know whether he was up or down. It was very clear that the revolutionary workers' and peasants' government was finished.

In addition, two government ministers, Dzur and Kucera, did not take part in the negotiations over the Moscow protocol. The negotiations were conducted by the Presidium of the party, and of the other members of the delegation, only Ludvik Svoboda and Gustav Husak played an active part. As we shall see, however, the word "negotiations" is scarcely appropriate, and for two reasons: in the first place, until the protocol was actually signed on the

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evening of August 26, we never actually met with any official body from the Soviet side but only various individuals who would present us with proposals in the form of ultimatums; and in the second place, apart from a general meeting on the night of August 25, the Czechoslovak side did not work out its position collectively either. The reasons why the Soviets took this approach are clear. It was not their intention to negotiate, but rather to compel us to ratify the conditions of capitulation. And in any case, they had learned in Cierna nad Tisou that even negotiations lasting several days would not necessarily result in the achievement of their aims. On the Czechoslovak side, the situation was clear as well: the party leadership was split into two factions, those who had tried to form a "revolutionary workers' and peasants' government," and those who would have stood trial under such a government. It was clear in advance that the group willing to collaborate would also be willing to agree to anything the Moscow Politburo proposed for the final protocol. This meant that only the remaining members of the Dubcek leadership had a genuine interest in really negotiating: Cernik, Smrkovsky, Spacek, Simon and myself, and, of course, Svoboda and Husak, who at the time did not belong clearly to one side or the other.

When I arrived at the Kremlin on the morning of August 25, some things had already been decided during the previous two days. When I refer to the negotiations, I have in mind those that took place while I was present, August 25-26. Before my arrival, three important questions had already been settled. The first was decided in favor of Dubcek's group: the Soviet side agreed to abandon the idea of trying to install a different leadership. The second and third points, however, were settled in Moscow's favor: the deliberations of the XIVth Congress of the CPCz in Vysocany were declared invalid, and the Czechoslovak representatives agreed to withdraw discussion of the situation in Czechoslovakia from the UN Security Council agenda. I think that Smrkovsky, Spacek and Simon came in on the negotiations after these points had been settled, whereas Svoboda and those with him, including Dubcek and Cernik, had all taken part at this stage.

I informed everyone present about the situation in Czechoslovakia. Briefly, this was my view: as a consequence of the massive nationwide resistance, the occupation armies were in an impossible quandary and had no means effectively to gain control of the situation without resorting to open acts of war against the civilian population. The Vysocany Congress had managed to buttress the authority of the CPCz among the population, and both Parliament and the government had recognized the Congress and had taken a firm stand against the occupation. All of that had effectively stabilized the structure of power, and this the occupiers had not been able to disrupt. It was only a provisional state of affairs, however, and it could even be dangerous: it would only take a few simple acts of provocation to cause conflicts to erupt, the already jittery occupying troops might lose their nerve and the situation would get out of hand for both sides. In general, people were looking for a solution to come from these negotiations. Dubcek, Svoboda, Cernik and

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Smrkovsky enjoyed tremendous authority and as long as they stood firmly united behind the solution eventually arrived at in Moscow, the great majority of the people at home would accept it as well. Part of the compromise to be worked out in Moscow, however, would have to include a guarantee that the foreign troops would leave Czechoslovakia within a stated period of time, and further there would have to be a guarantee that the political line of the CPCz would continue in the spirit of the Action Program. Then I described in some detail the role of the radio and press and the conditions they were laboring under. I then handed out the newspapers and leaflets that I had brought along in my briefcase and which graphically substantiated what I had been saying.

The many concrete questions asked gave rise to a discussion about different aspects of the situation. Svestka and Lenart played down the nationwide resistance and, on the contrary, emphasized the grave dangers entailed by procrastinating on a solution. They talked about the need for cooperation between our state organs and the occupying forces in practical matters, in order to avoid undesirable conflicts with the populace. On the whole, however, these men did not suggest a different political solution, and they did not object to making the departure of the foreign troops and the confirmation of the Action Program of the CPCz necessary conditions in any negotiations with Moscow. Moreover, not a word was mentioned about any necessary "fraternal assistance against the counter-revolution" or about the political line of the Action Program itself being "right-wing opportunism," at least not yet.

In a private conversation, I briefly informed Cernik, Smrkovsky, Spacek and Simon about how Bil'ak, Indra, Jakes and others had tried to form a government at the Soviet Embassy and how it had turned out. And they in turn described briefly what had happened to them since we had last seen each other in Dubcek's office on August 21. The five of us also agreed to forge a united approach during the forthcoming negotiations — and naturally we also agreed on unity with Dubcek as soon as he was able to take part in the meetings.

Then Cernik told me we had to draft our proposal for the final negotiations and present it as soon as possible to the Soviet Politburo. He had already worked out his own conception, which we discussed with the others, and then Bohumil Spacek and I began to draft the final text. That afternoon I dictated the text of this proposal in Russian to a typist in the Kremlin writing room.

In terms of its content, the proposal was in fact a variation of the position the CPCz Presidium had adopted in July to the Warsaw letter from the five future aggressors. Some of the arguments, however, and the general tone of the proposal were adapted to fit the new situation. We emphasized certain negative features and in particular we admitted that the powerful political pressure from below had gone beyond the aims and the control of the political leadership. But we still refused to characterize the situation as "counter-revolutionary" and stressed that the most important thing was the positive socialist and democratic current in the nationwide movement. We admitted

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that the situation in Czechoslovakia gave reasons for uneasiness in the five neighboring countries and that the leadership of the CPCz had underestimated that factor. Nevertheless, we considered the intervention itself as a step that could not solve the situation, that it was essentially a tragic mistake and therefore the most important thing was the withdrawal of the troops. In this light, we conceded the need to trim the further development of reforms in Czechoslovakia. However, the conclusions reached in Bratislava provided a possible way out, because, as far as domestic politics were concerned, our proposals stressed that the Action Program of the CPCz would continue to be the fundamental guide to the party's line. As far as I can recall, Cernik presented the text of this proposal to the Soviet Politburo.

Our proposal enraged the Soviets. They returned it with the remark that it was unacceptable and our delegation should be aware that it was in no position to present such an ultimatum. Perhaps so that we would be absolutely clear as to what they meant, the Soviet side then presented a counter-proposal that really was an ultimatum. It was from this text that the "Moscow protocol" eventually emerged. At first everyone in the Czechoslovak delegation rejected it, even the members of the pro-Moscow group. Smrkovsky then informed the Soviet Politburo of our rejection.

Exactly how often and with what changes the various versions of the proposals went back and forth I cannot recall. Two or three members of our delegation would always hand over sheets of paper with different proposals and notes on them to one or two representatives of the Soviet side, who would either be empowered to make decisions or not and accordingly would return the papers either at once or after some time, with a rejection. On such occasions, Cernik, Smrkovsky, Svestka, Lenart, Simon and I represented our side, and Kosygin, Suslov and Ponomaryov represented the Soviet Politburo. Simon and I always negotiated with Ponomaryov.

Later in the afternoon, when the Soviet Politburo had unequivocally rejected our proposal, subsequent discussions took place only on the basis of the Soviet proposal. The original version of this proposal differed from the one that was eventually signed as the Moscow protocol on three main points: it contained a statement acknowledging the military intervention as justified; it contained no commitment on the departure of the Soviet troops; and finally, it contained no recognition of the correctness of the political line of the CPCz. On the contrary, from certain phrases committing the signatories to invalidate the XIVth Congress of the CPCz and replace certain functionaries (concretely Kriegel, Cisar, Sik, Minister of the Interior Pavel, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Hajek), a political condemnation of the entire reform politics of the CPCz could be deduced. The protracted negotiations that followed concentrated on changing the wording of these three concrete points.

On the whole, the pro-Moscow group in the Dubcek leadership behaved passively during all this. It was a reasonable approach from their viewpoint, for they knew that the actual wording was not so important. Therefore, none of them came out in support of the original version of the Soviet proposal, nor

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did they oppose our efforts to change it. But they suggested no changes themselves and merely waited to see how the war of words would turn out. There were two people, however, not in the party leadership who actively promoted the Soviet aims in our delegation: Ludvik Svoboda and Gustav Husak. Svoboda's position, regardless of how one-sided it was, was at least based on the fact that every hour wasted in arriving at a solution increased the danger of conflict between the troops and the civilian population. Husak, on the other hand, in effect supported the Soviet proposals when he reduced any discussion about the XIVth Congress of the CPCz at Vysocany to the simple argument that the Congress had to be declared unstatutory because it took place without the participation of the delegates from Slovakia.

Everything seems to indicate that Ludvik Svoboda had come to his own conclusions about the sitaution on the night of August 21 and from that point on never changed his mind. Not only was he not a reform politician, he was not a politician at all. He was a soldier, an officer in the pre-war army of the First Czechoslovak Republic whom circumstances made commander of the Czechoslovak units fighting in the USSR on the side of the Soviet Union during World War II. It was during the war that he apparently accepted the notion of tying Czechoslovakia to the Soviet Union with all the consequences. As minister of defense in the pre-February 1948 government, he was formally a non-communist, but in fact not only was he a representative of the CPCz, his outlook was very clearly pro-Soviet, one that did not permit him to worry a great deal about the sovereignty of the nation in its relation with the USSR. He had a two-dimensional mind that evaluated everything from a simple military viewpoint: either you were with the Soviet army or against it. He may well have been a stronger pro-Soviet soldier than he was a communist. The dogmas of the communist ideology were probably quite alien to him, as were communist practices, but he was convinced that Czechoslovakia's pro-Soviet orientation was necessary. Svoboda clearly perceived the situation in August 1968 in terms of those categories, and that must have brought him close to the Soviet marshal's way of thinking. For them, the problems of democracy existed only insofar as they related to the military domination of the geographical area in which Czechoslovakia lies. Ludvik Svoboda had no objections to this domination, and that is the key to understanding his political attitudes.

On the night of August 22, when he said that he was going to Moscow to arrange for Dubcek's return, and then added in the same breath that Dubcek could submit his resignation and everything would be all right, I felt this was an inexplicable contradiction in his thinking. Given Svoboda's outlook, perhaps there was no contradiction at all. It would only have seemed so for someone who put the interests of the democratic political reforms above those of the Soviet marshals. So that when Svoboda, on the contrary, made the democratic reforms conditional on their compatibility with Soviet military designs, the conflict simply evaporated. He was against a Tartar solution, i.e., kidnapping and murdering the constitutional leaders. But he was not against Moscow's getting rid of unacceptable politicians by more civilized

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means, such as enforced resignation. He was not a supporter of intervention with all the consequences, he merely wanted to avoid a method of takeover that was barbarian and would lead to bloodshed.

Once, during the deliberations in the Kremlin, Svoboda shouted at the entire Dubcek leadership: "There you go, talk, talk, talking again! You've already talked and talked till your country's occupied. So act accordingly and do something! I've seen a lot of dead people in my life and I will not permit thousands to die just because of your jabbering."

Svoboda was not inventing the danger of bloodshed. Even the letter that the Vysocany Presidium, the Presidium of the National Assembly and the government had sent him in Moscow, said: "One dangerous factor is the growing weariness and nervous tension of the occupation troops and our citizens." Those who sent the letter, however, placed the interests of the democratic reforms above all else and therefore at the same time, urged Svoboda to break off negotiations temporarily and return to Prague with Dubcek and Cernik to help calm down the situation and consult with people at home. Ludvik Svoboda, however, saw things differently. He also wanted to return to Prague as soon as possible but with an agreement in his pocket so that the provisional state of affairs could be ended.

As for Svoboda's conviction that it was pointless to risk human lives in the given situation, I shared his feelings. During the proceedings in the Kremlin, Svoboda continually browbeat our delegation with visions of those potential victims and thousands of dead, and forced it to speed the negotiations. He was simply not concerned about how much room would be defined in the protocol for the continuing implementation of the CPCz reform policies. For this reason, he undoubtedly served the Soviet ends. Nevertheless, I refuse to place Ludvik Svoboda in the same category of people as Bil'ak, Indra, Jakes and others who, as representatives of the total dictatorship, had secretly helped to prepare the invasion, or people like Husak, who immediately went over to the side of the interveners in the interst of their own ambitions for power.

Moscow used Ludvik Svoboda in August 1968. In the following years, together with Husak's leadership of the CPCz, it misused him. Svoboda became utterly bogged down in the anti-reform politics of "normalization" and became an embarrassing stage-prop for that whole process. All this was made possible by his primitive pro-Soviet thinking, his advancing senility, and clearly also aspects of that personal vanity from which very few soldiers by profession and by nature are spared. In the end, he became an embarrassment to the nation and a liability ot the real rulers, and therefore was removed from the scene in 1975.

It was at these negotiations in the Kremlin that Gustav Husak quite unmistakably began his great play for the highest position in the CPCz. True, he supported both of the basic demands of the reform wing of the party leadership: that the final protocol provide a guarantee for the departure of foreign troops from the territory of the republic, and that it confirm the correctness of the line set out in the Action Program of the CPCz. At the same

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time, however, he consistently and unyieldingly supported the Soviet demand to invalidate the XIVth Congress of the CPCz in Vysocany. This question, as I have said, had already been provisionally settled before my arrival, but it was opened for discussion once again and ways were sought to find a compromise solution.

I myself had a direct interest in finding such a solution. I thought it absurd that the XIVth Congress, which had played such an important role both in terms of maintaining the authority of the CPCz among the populace and in saving the lives and the functions of the arrested members of the Dubcek leadership, was simply to be swept aside by some agreement with the Moscow Politburo. I had also come to Moscow as a representative of the party leadership elected by that congress and thus I was ultimately responsible to it. True, I was not myself a member of the Vysocany Presidium but Dubcek, Cernik, Smrkovsky, Spacek, Simon and Husak were. Formally speaking, these people were more competent to defend (or condemn) the position of the Vysocany Congress than I was. But they had not, as I had, sat in Vysocany and they had no idea what the atmosphere was like and what, even now, were the hopes of the delegates representing the CPCz. On the contrary, I could still recall the people in those CKD factory buildings and I could not help wondering how they would react to the suggestion that all their efforts during the occupation were simply to be declared "unstatutory."

Smrkovsky, Spacek and Simon, who had also arrived in the Kremlin, as I had, after our delegation had already provisionally agreed to the proposal, tried to have the question reopened. They too felt it was unthinkable simply to deny the XIVth Congress and its work when it had in fact saved them. Therefore, the matter was discussed again and again and a new, compromise solution was sought. We finally concluded that such a compromise might lie in the following approach: the election of the new Central Committee by the XIVth Congress would not be recognized as valid, for this is what Moscow was mainly concerned about. At the same time, this solution would follow naturally from what the Congress itself had declared, that the elections were not definitive and its deliberations were not yet concluded. As soon as possible — at that time we were thinking in terms of about two months — after most of the Soviet troops had been withdrawn from Czechoslovak territory, the Congress would then meet again, make adjustments in its resolutions, and elect a new Central Committee. Until that time, the old Central Committee and its Presidium would co-opt such members of the Vysocany Central Committee as would guarantee a predominance of reform communists in those organs. Thus, the question of invalidating the Congressional proceedings in Vysocany was to be worded in the final protocol in a way that would make that solution possible. This was managed in the end, and the compromise solution was carried out at a plenary session of the Central Committee of the CPCz on August 31, after the Dubcek leadership returned to Prague.

In behind-the-scenes meetings with members of the Soviet Politburo,

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Husak had obviously promised to press his demands on the CPCz delegation to invalidate the XIVth Congress, and this he did. In doing so, he made a compromise that much more difficult, but ultimately even he agreed with the compromise proposal because he had a serious personal motive for it: at the time he was not even a member of the Central Committee, and the Vysocany Congress had now elected him to the Presidium of the party. The proposed compromise, therefore, guaranteed his co-option into that organ. Originally Husak had banked on another possible outcome: he was hoping that the Congress of the CPS in Slovakia would elect him as first secretary of the Slovak party and thus he would enter the leadership independent of the Vysocany Congress. This is why he telephoned from Moscow to Bratislava and demanded that the Congress, which was scheduled for August 26, be postponed until the delegation returned from Moscow. His people had promised to comply and when I arrived in Moscow, he was convinced that the Slovakian party congress in Bratislava would not take place. I told him he was wrong, because I knew for a fact that the Bratislava Congress was to begin the next day, that it would approve the proceedings of the Vysocany Congress and that a delegation from Vysocany would be present at it as well. I even told him who would be in that delegation, because that had been decided before I left Vysocany. Husak heard me out, looking at me all the while with a self-assured and superior smile as if to say I was a poor fool who hadn't a clue about how politics really worked and then said it was all nonsense; the Congress in Bratislava would not take place, that he knew it would not and after all, it depended on him.

Toward evening, Husak must have discovered that the congress would be taking place the next day after all. And he also knew that it would take place in his absence. This undermined his self-assurance and he was more willing to seek a compromise over the Vysocany Congress, one that would allow the co-option of some of the people elected there into the top party functions, for in his case it could mean a substitute entreé into power. But Husak was ultimately able to realize his original aim as well: the Congress of the CPS did begin on August 26, but Husak arrived on August 27, and he managed to push through a motion invalidating the Vysocany Congress, thus discharging his pledge to Moscow. At the same time, by being elected First Secretary of the party in Slovakia, he was guaranteed a place on the Politburo in Prague quite independent of the Vysocany Congress. Still, on the first evening of their deliberations, when Husak was not yet present, the Slovakian Congress did approve a resolution condemning the intervention in the same spirit as the Vysocany Congress.

During the proceedings in the Kremlin, Husak always conducted himself in such a way that he appeared to be the friend and ally of Dubcek, Svoboda and Cernik. In particular, he somehow always managed directly or indirectly to support Svoboda. Even then, his behavior toward Smrkovsky always betrayed a certain reserve. People like Spacek, Simon or myself were never important enough in the power structure to warrant his attention. At the same time, however, he did not join forces with the pro-Moscow group, with Bil'ak,

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Indra, Jakes and others — his present companions in power. Even so, he made a good personal impression on the members of the Moscow Politburo. Just before we flew home from Moscow, Kosygin said to me: "Comrade Husak is such a competent comrade and a wonderful communist. We didn't know him personally before, but he quite impressed us here."

I never harbored any illusions about Gustav Husak. We met for the first time at a rather late date — in March 1968 — when we were both working at the Academy of Sciences — he in Bratislava and I in Prague. At a meeting of the research team I was leading on problems relating to the development of the political system in Czechoslovakia, we were discussing the question of the constitutional structure of relations between Czechs and Slovaks. I already knew a good deal about him from various friends and enemies of his, and I was prepared to meet an ambitious politician who was trying to make a comeback in the world of power. But what I actually encountered went beyond all my expectations. The members of our team were used to speaking concretely, openly and with tolerance for differences of opinion, but Husak spoke like a political boss handing out orders and condescendingly explaining the correct "line" to people of lesser worth. The substance of what he said was profoundly conservative: he reproduced banal clichés from Lenin's *State and Revolution*, mainly the kind of statements that developments in the Soviet Union and other states in the Soviet bloc had long since proven wrong, and quite as a matter of principle he closed off all avenues of thought implying pluralist democratic conceptions of socialist political systems. His solution to the question of Czech-Slovak relations was the creation of a federal state. As a whole, his performance was dogmatic and in places arrogant and demagogic.

In the final phases of the discussion, I told him that his contribution wasn't bad as platform speeches went, but that it was completely devoid of any ideas. Husak could hardly contain his rage, and it was clear that I had made an enemy of him. But the impression he made on me was so utterly negative that I had no desire to strike up a friendship with him and so I did not care.

Husak's need for self-fulfillment is bound up with the world of politics and power. In the depths of his soul he is convinced that his mission is to show others the proper path. Kusy, one of the foremost reform communists in Slovakia, told me how he met Husak at dawn on August 21 in front of the Central Committee building in Bratislava, when the tanks were rumbling about and the chaotic atmosphere of those first few hours of occupation reigned. The first thing Husak shouted to him above the roaring of the engines was: "I shall lead the nation out of this catastrophe." Only a person who was deeply persuaded of his messianic role could have said that at such a time.

It is very probable that in August 1968, in the Kremlin, Husak himself had no idea what kind of domestic political situation would arise under his rule in Czechoslovakia. I don't think he originally wanted to liquidate a third of the CPCz membership as "aiders and abettors of the counter-revolution" nor did he imagine that Vasil Bil'ak, whom he despised, would become his main supporter. Nevertheless, the Kremlin negotiations almost certainly marked

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the beginning of his deliberate climb toward the highest position in the party and in the land, and he was essentially ready at that point to sacrifice the reform politics of the Prague Spring to his ambitions for power.

Late in the evening of August 25, with Dubcek and Kriegel absent, there were five supporters of democratic reform in the Kremlin — Cernik, Smrkovsky, Spacek, Simon and I, standing against seven representatives of the pro-Moscow group (Bil'ak, Jakes, Svestka, Piller, Lenart, Barbirek, Ribo). The five of us were still trying to work out some changes in the Soviet proposals for the final document that would leave at least slightly more space for the CPCz reform politics. At the same time, we were being shouted at by Ludvik Svoboda and just as frequently by Gustav Husak. All this was being observed by the ministers Dzur and Kucera and the ambassador to Moscow at the time, Vladimir Koucky. These men took no part in the deliberations, but it was not difficult to tell that they, too, would sign the Soviet proposal without hesitation.

At the same time, the Soviet Politburo put constant pressure on the Czechoslovak delegation. This was done on the one hand in separate conversations with individual members of our group, in which they employed the method of alternating intimidation with kindness and promises that gave the individuals concerned the hope that they might personally enjoy Soviet support. But it was also done by creating a generally ominous atmosphere around the talks in which two great threats hung in the air.

The first threat was the awareness that we would not leave the Kremlin until we had signed the Soviet ultimatum. The Soviet side openly stressed this threat several times. "If you won't sign it tomorrow, you will in a week," they said. There was no doubt that the Kremlin could carry out such a threat. The six members of the Presidium who were arrested originally had very clear ideas of what this might entail. They were in the situation of people who had already been through the second stage of the inquisition: they had been shown the instruments of torture. I am not just using that as a figure of speech: it was literally true. I know that they had all reckoned on dying. Of course, at the same time, that may give one strength, because fear of death is followed by reconciliation with one's fate. Psychologically, however, the situation changes quite radically when the gate to life opens once again. The suicide who happens to be rescued is not likely to repeat his act right away.

But it was not just the fact that some members of the Dubcek leadership were in a position more like that of people being blackmailed by gangsters than members of a state delegation attending political negotiations; the essential issue was that we all knew that on certain serious matters the Kremlin would not retreat even at the price of massive and politically senseless bloodshed in Czechoslovakia. And that was the second menace the Soviet leadership continually dangled over us, not only via Svoboda, but also in direct talks with some members of our delegation. We were told that if any conflicts with the population broke out, the armies had orders to use their weapons. We had to understand, they said, that they simply could not back down without coming to some kind of general political agreement. If things

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dragged out, we would bear the responsibility for the lives of the civil population of Czechoslovakia.

Considering the matter in retrospect, it is easy to say that Moscow would never have resorted to such drastic measures, or if they had, that the international consequences would have been catastrophic and a historically and morally important victory for the nation itself, because the long line of capitulations in its history would be broken once and for all by a collective act of heroic resistance against an overwhelmingly powerful aggressor, and such an act would have straightened the nation's backbone. Of course, we all thought about such things at the time, but it is difficult to accept the responsibility for a bloody massacre on the basis of such considerations. Nor could we console ourselves with the hope that such a massacre might not take place as long as we were unable to reach an agreement in the Kremlin: retreat from the original plan and a hastily improvised alternative in which the Kremlin tried to reach an agreement with the very people who were originally to have been put on trial by a "revolutionary tribunal" — that was as much as the popular passive resistance could hope to achieve. Were the talks to break down, the Kremlin would have had no choice other than to fall back on the original plan in an even more bloody form. It is an illusion to think that a robber who only threatens to use his gun as long as he can get what he wants without actually firing it will not use it at all if he finds himself in trouble and can see no other way out. And the Soviet Politburo was no tyro: the rich tradition of Stalinist mass crimes and Budapest in 1956 both spoke the same language.

Naturally, Moscow too would have found it less acceptable to administer the country for a time through direct military occupation and thus carry the act of aggression through to its logical conclusion. But the forces that had already initiated the occupation could have gone ahead with establishing a military government, and in certain circumstances they would have had to. In practice, the Politburo would not even have to agree: it would be enough if the "hawks" among the army chiefs of staff were to make the decision. It was within their power to unleash a massacre and then to blame it on "unrest" caused by the "counter-revolution" and Czechoslovak citizens.

We knew that the Soviet leadership, having been forced to negotiate with Dubcek, wanted him and other representatives of the reform to carry out with their own hands what had proved impossible using Bil'ak and Indra. The success of such a venture, however, depended equally on those who would complete it. The instrument Moscow wanted to use was double-edged and again this raised a number of political possibilities. The route of compromise undeniably gave us certain options, and to some extent it would be entirely up to us how we exploited them. However small that hope may have been, it did give us a politically realistic perspective, and compared to the alternative of a military massacre, we felt that compromise was the only acceptable solution.

It was evident that the Soviet Politburo was not united over the developments in Czechoslovakia, or more precisely, over the question of military intervention. Therefore, we also considered the possibility that a

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failure of military methods might once more strengthen the position of those who originally disagreed with that approach. A political compromise with Moscow would have been unilaterally advantageous to the Kremlin in any case, but it would not necessarily have meant the end of reform politics, for the demands of the "hawks" could still have been diluted by suggesting the deployment of a small number of Soviet strategic weapon units and this need not have been a threat to the reform politics, though of course their scope would have to be considerably reduced. In other words, a kind of "Kadarization" was possible, in better conditions, without bloodshed, deportations, or police repressions, and in a situation which would not mean the complete elimination of the reforms or the re-establishment of a totalitarian dictatorship with no openness for future domestic development.

This is roughly the way we were all thinking — Cernik, Smrkovsky, Spacek, Simon and I. At the same time, of course, each of us had our own ideas which were often different, and these also played a role. It was clear to everyone that our ideas were mere hypotheses in which, as the Czech proverb goes, "the wish is often father to the thought," and that we were trying to see the best of the given options. In mutual discussions, we expressed doubts and sometimes made ironic comments about our faith, and occasionally one of us would succumb to skepticism. I recall how suddenly, several times, in a kind of lightning flash of clear perception without logical coherence or arguments, I felt that all our thoughts were utter nonsense, that we were in fact lying to ourselves and that the truth was quite simple: we were about to sign a capitulation, we were renouncing everything and the nation could only see it as treason.

The first one to conclude that it was utterly necessary to sign the Soviet ultimatum was Cernik. This, of course, altered the situation as far as trying to work out various alternatives went. It was clear that the entire pro-Moscow group, a majority of the delegation, including the ministers Dzur and Kucera and the ambassador Koucky, would sign the ultimatum no matter what form it took. And it was clear that Svoboda and Husak would sign it, too. If Cernik were to sign it as well, the only remaining member of the delegation who mattered to the political success of the Soviet strategy was Dubcek. Without Smrkovsky's signature, the situation would have been far more complicated, but it would not have been an unmitigated political failure. My signature, along with Spacek's, Simon's and Kriegel's, had very little political significance and could scarcely have tipped the balance one way or the other.

Dubcek's point of view, however, remained unclear until the ceremonial proceedings on August 26 which were supposed to end with the signing of the document, and even then it changed. Dubcek was still absent from our meeting on the night of August 25. Someone went to consult with him several times, and Dubcek always supported the changes we proposed and wanted us to continue working on the text and negotiating, but he would not commit himself to sign until the document was in its final form.

Later in the night of August 25, the whole Czechoslovak delegation, with the exception of Dubcek, Kriegel and Indra, met around one table. Cernik

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chaired the meeting, and each of us was expected to say whether he would sign the protocol the next day or not. The protocol itself was not yet in final form; this was to happen next day in a meeting with the entire Politburo of the CPSU, which meant that there was still time to make changes. So far, the Soviet side had not even accepted the formulation about the departure of the soldiers from Czechoslovak territory that was ultimately contained in the final version of the protocol, and therefore I thought it was premature for everyone to commit themselves to sign, even though it was only in principle and did not rule out further attempts at changing the wording. This was the meeting where Ludvik Svoboda shouted at us for talking and talking until our country was occupied by foreign armies. Husak, too, urged everyone to make their position clear. The atmosphere was very heavy, tense, and overwrought. I refused to give my assurances of a "yes" at this meeting, and reserved my decision until the next day, depending on how the final negotiations went. All the rest said they would vote "yes." As far as the absent members of the delegation were concerned, there was naturally no doubt about where Indra stood. Kriegel's position was not known at all, and Dubcek too refused to commit himself until the following day. His position was the only one that could still have influenced the situation to any significant extent.

The meeting finished sometime between two and three in the morning, and I did not get back to the government villa in the Lenin Hills area until after 3 o'clock. Just as in the Kremlin, the salon tables were laden with vodka, cognac, caviar, sturgeon and other delicacies. I went to my room and literally fell onto the bed from exhaustion. Then I heard a quiet knock on the door. I opened it and saw a young woman in a very attractive nightgown beneath which, it would seem, she wore no other article of clothing. "Is there anything more you'd like, comrade?" she said, smiling seductively. I didn't know what further services I could ask for as a guest of the Kremlin, but I wasn't interested in finding out. Irritably I replied that I only wanted them all to leave me alone, and closed the door.

Since the fateful night of August 20, I had slept only three times, and then for no more than four hours at a time. I had smoked hundreds of cigarettes and drunk dozens of cups of black coffee. During my waking hours the tension never once let up. I was so desperately exhausted that sleep refused to come. My head was swarming, not with thoughts, but rather with images and sensations, endless, illogical films or something like visions. And sometimes, in the intervals between them, I would suddenly have an extraordinarily clear and simple perception.

I opened the window and looked into the garden. The fresh early morning air had a soothing effect on me, and thoughts began to replace the visions. Now, for the first time, my mind began to deal with the situation as a whole and identify what was essential in it. For as long as I had been caught up in the unbroken flow of events, conversations, consultations, decisions about dozens of concrete things, the writing of proposals and notes, translating them into Russian and thinking about concrete options in the given moment, I had merely been playing out a role like a programmed computer. The

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things that were happening outside me were either simply so much stage decoration or they were events from which I received signals that guided my practical activity. What was happening inside me was stored up, but my mind had had no time to digest it. From that storehouse of experiences, impressions, feelings and unexpressed words, my mind was not invaded with questions that demanded answers. In essence, they all boiled down to a single answer to a fundamental question: what had actually happened and what was my role in all of this?

The fact that I was now sitting in Moscow, half hostage, half government guest, was the logical outcome of my entire life, of my entire political activity. I was responsible for this situation myself. The crucial date was not August 20, 1968, but February 25, 1948. For it was then that I had made the unconditional decision, on the basis of personal convictions, to join those who had decided to submit themselves unconditionally to Moscow and its aims "for eternity." It is no longer material why I did it or why the others did so, whether the ideas and the ideals that led them to do it were meant well or not. It happened and it was my own decision. For more than 10 years I had known that Moscow was the headquarters of crime and that I did not wish to act as its servant. But what was I doing now? I was trying to change this through reforms at home, in Czechoslovakia, hoping all the while that the sincere good will to have done with crimes existed in Moscow as well, and that therefore they would allow me to proceed. I had certain reasons to believe this, but at the same time there were also persuasive reasons for believing the opposite. But I had underestimated or overlooked them because they were disturbing to my conceptions of reform communism.

There was nothing in what had happened up to a week ago that went against the logic of things. Moscow had merely decided to stem the reform experiment because it seemed too threatening to its real interests. And seen from Moscow's viewpoint, it was only logical for them to put me on trial and ask me: well, what's it going to be? Are you with us for "eternity" or not? After all, that is the gist of what you've been saying for the last 20 years. And all they wanted to hear was a yes or no — the details didn't interest them.

Old General Svoboda was right, after all, when he railed at us and told us to realize the situation we were in. He understood it and was giving Moscow his unequivocal "yes." He asked us all to do the same and if anyone wanted to disagree, then let him say "no," but he should not drag proceedings out any longer. We were caught off guard by the fact that the Soviet Politburo was acting like a band of gangsters. But that too was our fault. Kadar was right to ask Dubcek: "Do you *really* not know the kind of people you are dealing with?" He thought it impossible that Dubcek would not know. We were really fools, but our folly was the ideology of reform communism.

My leg was tingling from leaning against the wide sill of the open window, and so I pulled myself up to sit on it. At that very instant, from the shadow of a cedar tree, a man in civilian clothes emerged. I had no doubt whatsoever about his profession. He came up to the window and asked the same question as the young girl at my door: "Is there anything you'd like, comrade?" I said

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there wasn't, slipped off the sill and lay down on the bed. Even this man in the garden demonstrated that Moscow had everything better planned than I had. Perhaps he was there to prevent me from jumping out the window, in case I had chosen that way of avoiding a definite answer. He might have blown a whistle and summoned up two more KGB officers on the run. The window was not a high one, and they could have caught me without difficulty. I doubt whether I'd even have broken a leg.

It was almost 6 in the morning, and at 9 o'clock, the meeting in the Kremlin was to continue. I thought about signing the Soviet ultimatum. I knew it would be signed, and that the signatures on it would also be the logical outcome of the lives of those who signed. Not to sign it would mean beginning an entirely different life. Would I be up to it? I felt that I would like to try. The real consequences of all my political endeavors, including this most recent stage of reform communism, had been catastrophic. Good intentions meant nothing: Dante had known, after all, that they merely paved the road to hell. I decided not to sign the protocol. Then, overcome by weariness, I fell asleep.

After 9 o'clock, we all met in the Kremlin again. I announced my decision not to sign the protocol to Cernik, and also to Bil'ak as a representative of the pro-Moscow group. I wanted them all to know. I suggested a conciliatory way of doing it: I would go to the president's physician, whom I knew personally, pretend to be sick and simply not turn up at the final session. To attend and not sign the protocol would certainly have provoked more hostility, and I did not want this, nor did I want to put pressure on the others who had already decided. I simply did not want to sign. Bil'ak said something to the effect that I could do what I wanted but he did not welcome my decision and he looked gloomy and reproachful. Cernik brought Spacek over and we began to talk about my decision. Then I discussed it separately with Smrkovsky and Simon. The result of these talks was that I finally reversed my decision. Why?

All four told me that they had gone through the same phase themselves. In their case, it had happened immediately when they went through the transformation from prisoners into government delegates, and they were persuaded by the same feeling — that they were no longer in a position to make responsible decisions. And yet in the end they changed their minds. My arguments the day before had strengthened their conviction that compromise was not hopeless, and that it was still possible to create in Czechoslovakia a better and more promising situation than the Hungarians after the 1956 intervention. Naturally, they said, it was my decision, but I had to be aware that in rejecting the protocol, I would be settling the matter only for myself and my own conscience and would be doing nothing for the political options in the future. If I were to leave the party leadership now, it would make it more difficult for them and jeopardize a great deal that might still be salvaged. Moreover, I would put them all in a bad light by making the act of signing the protocol look like a betrayal of personal honor and conscience and not a fulfillment of the duty to seek a political way out of a situation that we bore mutual responsibility for. At the same time, I learned that Dubcek

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would be taking part in the final negotiations and would be insisting only on a few as-yet unsettled changes in the text, mainly concerning the withdrawal of the troops from Czechoslovakia.

The night was gone in which I had been alone with myself and my past life. It was a new day and once more I stood among the others, playing my role again, and once more my brain began functioning like a programmed computer. And quite unrelated to that, I had to admit in the depths of my soul that one of the basic arguments was valid: I too bore political responsibility for everything that had happened and not to try to find a way out of the situation now meant to abdicate that responsibility. Thus I discussed once more with those four men the concrete and detailed aspects of the political solution we sought.

When I had finally changed my mind and agreed to sign the protocol along with the others, I saw the political future in approximately the following terms. The protocol, no matter what further adjustments were made to it, gave Moscow a clear political advantage and the possibility of bringing systematic pressure to bear on the reform politics of the CPCz. At the same time, however, it gave us a number of opportunities to preserve some room for these policies. In the end, the outcome would not be decided by the words of the protocol anyway, but by the ratio of forces both in Czechoslovakia and in Moscow. After returning to Prague, the most important and powerful political positions would remain in the hands of representatives of reform. Moreover, the tremendous strength of the nationwide resistance to the occupation would weaken the position of the pro-Moscow group in the entire power structure from top to bottom, despite the fact that the protocol was expressly designed to protect them. It would still be possible to push them into less important positions than they had held so far. The most crucial factor would be to achieve the departure of the troops at the very latest by the end of the year, except for a small number of soldiers Moscow had been trying for years to have posted in Czechoslovakia, something it would now be impossible to prevent. In the same period, it would be necessary to reconvene the XIVth Congress and elect a new Central Committee. Both these aims might be achieved, we felt, because one consequence of the enormous international reaction condemning the occupation would be that Moscow would now have an interest in cooling down the situation. On the whole, it was probable that the "hawks" in the Moscow Politburo were now on the defensive.

All of that was possible, but by no means inevitable. If by the end of the year it was clear that things were developing in a different direction and it proved impossible to maintain the position of the reform politics, there would be only one thing left to do: the reform leadership would have to resign in a way that would allow it to appoint its own successors and thus rule out the chance that the "revolutionary workers' and peasants' government" people would get into power after all, i.e., that the leadership of the CPCz would become a direct agent of Soviet power. Moscow would agree to such a change, because it would mean getting rid of Dubcek — and Bil'ak and Indra had in the meantime fallen so short in the eyes of the Russians that they were no

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longer suitable and therefore Moscow would accept a "third group" in power. This group, through a process of "Kadarization," would bridge the gap for several years after which time it would be possible to move into a new period of reform. For this to work, the CPCz would have to preserve the reform communist cadres developed to prevent the leadership from being taken over by a sectarian clique acting as Soviet agents.

The success of such a scenario would depend on the unity of the reform group around Dubcek. And that was what we promised each other at the time. I never had any illusions about the durability of human relations inside the CPCz leadership. Only a few years ago they had murdered each other; it had always been full of intrigue and a mere six days ago, one part of the leadership had been arrested in the name of the other. But now it was not that other group or any clan inside the bureaucratic apparatus that mattered. One part of the Dubcek leadership had lived through so much together that I believed it would be possible to establish some lasting relations based on personal confidence, honor, conscience, and solemn promises. Two months later, this, too, would prove to be just another illusion. And equally as illusory was the hope that the Kremlin would strive for anything less than a complete, although gradual, realization of its original aims.

In a situation where we felt like hostages in the hands of gangsters, how could we seriously have thought that after a time the Kremlin would have an interest in seeing the situation settle down in Czechoslovakia, and not in the utter elimination of all political forces displeasing to it? There are only two answers: first, we desired it to be that way and therefore we persuaded ourselves that it was possible; and second, we were still believing communists, our reform ideas notwithstanding. This, of course, is only an explanation: there is no way, either politically or morally, to justify it.

Sometime around noon, when I announced that I had changed my mind and would sign the protocol, Cernik embraced me with undisguised and genuine delight. But such delight was very probably selfish: Cernik was glad there was no one left in the leadership who differed from him and who could one day say: I did not sign it. His delight was premature, however, and was soon clouded by Kriegel.

We had already discussed why Kriegel was not with us the day before. The Soviet side made various excuses and in conversations with individual members of the leadership of the CPCz, it tried to isolate Kriegel from the rest of us. But now, when the document was to be signed, the matter could not be put off any longer and so they brought Kriegel to the Kremlin. First of all, Smrkovsky met with him in another room and then in the afternoon, Kriegel joined us. The situation was demeaning for him and shameful for the rest of us. Whatever the reasons or excuses for it were, the fact was that we had all gone ahead without him and now we were presenting him with a *fait accompli:* there was nothing left to do but sign the protocol. Kriegel categorically refused. Of course, we had all done that at the beginning, too, and he was still in the initial phase of things, just as we had been yesterday.

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The difference was that Kriegel never advanced to the next phase and held fast to his original refusal.

We all tried to persuade him to change his mind. Ludvik Svoboda repeated his performance from the day before and shouted at him so vehemently that Kriegel eventually protested and Svoboda fell silent. I remember Kriegel saying, "What can they do to me? Send me to Siberia or have me shot. I fully expect that to happen but I won't sign just because of that." He scarcely listened to the political justifications for the compromise and the options that compromise would allow us, and he refused to take part in any discussion of them. He did not even seem like a politician: at that moment he was simply a man being threatened with death by bandits who were not demanding his money as ransom but his honor, his children, or his wife. And that man replies, "No! Go ahead and kill me!" I think that Kriegel, who had been kept prisoner in total isolation for the past few days, had come to the conclusion that he was condemned to death, and he came to terms with it. He therefore had no reason to mar the final hours of his life with an act that went against his conscience.

I am not mentioning this to reduce the political significance of Kriegel's refusal in any way, but simply because I think it is true. Kriegel's conduct at the time was that of a man, not a politician. As subsequent developments proved, that was far more appropriate in the given situation than ours, for we were genuinely being blackmailed by gangsters but we succumbed to the illusion that we were politicians deliberating with other politicians over political problems. Kriegel then said he would not be a party to any negotiations with the Soviet Politburo and allowed himself to be led away again. But an initiative came from the Soviet side to have him present at the negotiations, for whoever was stage-managing the whole affair evidently wanted to have an open argument and disagreement between the rest of us and Kriegel before the eyes of the Soviet Politburo. Dubcek, however, resolutely refused to let this happen and the meeting took place without Kriegel. For the sake of symmetry, Indra was not there either. And so at last, with Dubcek this time, we sat down on one side of the huge conference table, with the Soviet Politburo on the other.

The meeting began in the late afternoon and Brezhnev opened the proceedings. In a shamelessly jovial tone he uttered the standard cliches about the comradely relations and common interests that would now form the basis for our agreement concerning the complex and serious situation. He spoke about how the Soviet Politburo had decided to intervene militarily only with great pain and regret, but that it was unavoidable because the interests of socialism were paramount. He praised the statesmanlike wisdom of Ludvik Svoboda, a faithful friend of the Soviet Union and hero of World War II. He professed his great love for Czechoslovakia and was visibly moved by his own rhetoric.

According to the plan, the Czechoslovak side was expected to respond with a number of similar cliches and then the proposed agreement would be dealt with paragraph by paragraph. Dubcek's psychological state of mind was still

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very bad: the doctors had readied him for the meeting with some injections, and therefore Cernik made the opening remarks for the Czech side. On the whole he spoke concretely, avoiding any empty phrases about comradely relations and eternal friendship. Very circumspectly, he defended the Action Program of the CPCz and between the lines he rejected the notion that the military intervention was in the interests of socialism.

Someone from the Soviet Politburo reacted to his speech with a remark that increased the tension, and then Brezhnev intervened with a rejection of one of Cernik's points. There was a moment or so of tense silence, then Cernik finished and Dubcek asked to speak — or perhaps he simply began talking without any of the procedural formalities. At first, he stammered and slurred his words but after a few sentences he gradually found his tongue and delivered his speech in fluent Russian. It was an inspired, emotional defense of the "revival process" in Czechoslovakia that ever more clearly grew into a polemic and an indictment of the interveners. Dubcek's speech was improvised; he simply said what he thought, and thus it was more effective both in form and content.

Brezhnev immediately launched into a counter-offensive — also improvised — against Dubcek. It was perhaps the only truly interesting speech from the Soviet side during the entire course of the negotiations, for Brezhnev too said what he really thought. He gave brief and intelligible answers to three basic questions: what bothered Moscow most about the Prague Spring; how Moscow regarded the sovereignty of the states in its own bloc; and what it considered important in international politics.

Brezhnev did not waste words on a long official speech about the "counter-revolutionary forces" or the "interests of socialism," but concretely and clearly blamed Dubcek for conducting domestic politics without seeking his — Brezhnev's — prior approval and agreement, and even sometimes for literally refusing to listen to his suggestions and advice. "From the very beginning I wanted to help you out against Novotny," Brezhnev said to Dubcek, "and right away in January I asked you: are his people threatening you? Do you want to replace them? Do you want to replace the minister of the interior? And the minister of national defense? And is there anyone else you want to replace? But you said, 'No, they're good comrades.' And then suddenly I hear that you've replaced the minister of the interior, of national defense and other ministers, and that you replaced secretaries of the Central Committee.

"In February I told you what I thought of your speech, and I pointed out that some of your formulations were not correct. But even so you didn't change them! Is that any way to do things? Here, even I myself, when I'm preparing a speech, give it to all the members of the Politburo for their comments. Isn't that right, comrades?" Brezhnev said, turning to look at the entire Politburo, which was sitting in a row beside him and, with nodding heads and murmurs of agreement, confirmed the truth of the boss' statement. "You see, we have a collective leadership here," Brezhnev continued, and that means you have to submit your opinions to the approval of the others."

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Brezhnev was personally and sincerely angered that Dubcek had betrayed his trust by not having every step he took approved beforehand in the Kremlin. "I believed you and I stood up for you against the others," he reproached Dubcek. "Our Sasha is a good comrade, I said. And you disappointed us all so terribly." At moments like this, Brezhnev's voice would quiver with regret and he spoke haltingly, as though he were close to tears. The impression he made was that of a deeply wronged patriarch who fully believed it was entirely natural and proper that his position as head of the family entitled him to the unconditional subservience and obedience of all its members, for his opinion and his will was, after all, the natural and final authority and in any case he was only thinking of the best interests of all the family. The notion that things could, or even should, be any different was inherently alien to him and quite naturally he saw in it an expression of hostility and betrayal.

It was from this main transgression — that Prague did not always seek the approval of the Kremlin for everything it did — that Brezhnev inferred all the other sins: "Anti-socialist tendencies" were rife, the press wrote what it liked, "counter-revolutionary organizations" were formed and the leadership of the CPCz was under pressure from these forces to which it continually gave ground. If Dubcek had done what Brezhnev had approved of or advised him to, if he had struck from his speeches the words and passages Brezhnev had suggested, and if he had appointed the ministers and secretaries that Brezhnev had agreed to, none of those horrors could have happened. That, in a nutshell, was Brezhnev's view of the Prague Spring.

Then Brezhnev explained to Dubcek that the end result of all this was Moscow's realization that the Dubcek leadership could not be depended upon. Even he himself, Brezhnev, who had long defended "our Sasha," had to admit that this was so. Because at this stage it began to touch on things that were quite different and the most fundamental of all — the results of World War II.

Brezhnev spoke at length about the sacrifices made by the Soviet Union in World War II: the soldiers fallen in battle, the civilians slaughtered, the enormous material losses, the hardships suffered by the Soviet people. At the cost of all that, the Soviet Union had gained security, and the guarantee of that security was the post-war division of Europe and, concretely, the fact that Czechoslovakia was linked with the Soviet Union "forever." According to Brezhnev, this was a logical and justifiable result of the fact that thousands of Soviet soldiers sacrificed their lives for Czechoslovak freedom, and Czechs and Slovaks should therefore honor their graves, not defile them. Our western borders were not only our own borders, but the common borders of the "socialist camp." The Soviet Politburo would not allow the results of that war to be jeopardized, for it had no right to dishonor the sacrifices of the Soviet people.

Brezhnev admitted that after the military intervention, the situation in Czechoslovakia would be difficult, for people would look at things emotionally. Even Dubcek's party leadership could be taken to task for not yet

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seeing things in the proper light. "Today it might seem impossible for you to accept it all," said Brezhnev. "But look at Gomulka. In 1956 he too was against the Soviet armies helping Poland, just as you are. But if I were to tell him today that I was about to withdraw the Soviet army from Poland, Gomulka would jump into a special plane, fly here and plead with me not to do it."

Brezhnev never did produce any proofs that the "western imperialists" were posing a genuine threat to Czechoslovakia. He did not trot out any of the official lies of the Soviet press about the "Western revanchists" preparing an invasion, the American officers among the crowds of tourists in Prague, etc. Brezhnev's logic was simple: "We in the Kremlin came to the conclusion that we could not depend on you any longer. You do what you feel like in domestic politics, even things that displease us, and you are not open to positive suggestions. But your country lies on territory where the Soviet soldier trod in the Second World War. We bought that territory at the cost of enormous sacrifice, and we shall never leave it. The borders of that area are our borders as well. Because you do not listen to us, we feel threatened. In the name of the dead in World War II who laid down their lives for your freedom as well, we are therefore fully justified in sending our soldiers into your country, so that we may feel truly secure within our common borders. It is immaterial whether anyone is actually threatening us or not; it is a matter of principle, independent of external circumstances. And that is how it will be, after the Second World War, for 'eternity.' "

Brezhnev pretended to be almost astonished; it was so simple, how could we fail to understand? Words like "sovereignty," "national independence" did not come up in his speech at all, nor did any other common cliches that officially justify the "mutual interests of the socialist countries." There was only one simple idea behind everything he said: during the war our soldiers fought their way to the Elbe, and that is where our real Western borders — the Soviet borders — are today.

For us, Brezhnev went on, the results of World War II are inviolable and we will defend them even at the cost of risking a new war. And then he said in so many words that they would have undertaken the military intervention in Czechoslovakia even if such a risk had existed. But, he added, there was no such danger any more. "I asked President Johnson if the American government still fully recognizes the results of the conferences in Yalta and Potsdam. And on August 18 I received the reply: as far as Czechoslovakia and Romania are concerned, it recognizes them without reservation; in the case of Yugoslavia, it would have to be discussed." So what do you think will be done on your behalf? Nothing. There will be no war because of what has happened. Comrade Tito and Comrade Ceausescu will speak their minds, and so will Comrade Berlinguer. Well, and what of it? You are counting on the communist movement in Western Europe, but that won't mean anything for 50 years."

Once again, his words were simple and clear. Brezhnev was giving us reform communists a truly invaluable lesson: here we were like fools thinking

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about a model of socialism that would work for the whole of Europe, including Western Europe, and he, the realist, knew that it wouldn't mean a thing for 50 years. Why? It's simply because the borders of socialism, which is to say the borders of the Soviet Union, stop for the time being at the Elbe. Even the American president agreed with that, so that for another 50 years the state of things will likely remain unchanged. What does a Berlinguer mean? Does he have any tanks? Can he alter the results of World War II?

Brezhnev obviously expected that after such a clear and intelligible exposition even Dubcek would understand the situation he was in, and then the protocol which was to be ceremonially signed could be discussed. But that did not happen, for Dubcek began to argue with him. I cannot recall what his precise words were or what concrete points he opposed, but it made Brezhnev lose his self-control and he interrupted Dubcek and began shouting at him, his face flushed. At last he declared angrily: "All the discussions so far have clearly been pointless. It's all just a repetition of Cierna nad Tisou. It's useless, it's getting us nowhere, and therefore," he said, "we are breaking off discussions."

Brezhnev, and with him the entire membership of the Soviet Politburo, stood up and prepared to walk out. In the ensuing confusion Ludvik Svoboda began to speak in an attempt to calm the storm. Brezhnev stopped, listened to what he had to say, and then turned again to the exit, saying only that the next step would have to be decided upon. Then he walked out, followed by the entire Soviet "collective leadership" which left the room behind him like a line of geese.

To this day I am not certain if this incident took place entirely by chance. The impression I had at the time was that it was a theatrical trick planned beforehand. Brezhnev's reaction and his command to leave the room were quite exaggerated. I genuinely cannot recall the words that apparently so enraged him, and therefore I do not think Dubcek could have said anything so provocative, at least nothing more provocative than what he'd said already. And the subsequent proceedings seemed to indicate rather that it was a planned move by the Soviet Politburo, intended to establish the proper atmosphere for approving the protocol, an atmosphere in which the Czech reformists would be on their guard and keep their inapposite remarks to a minimum. But whatever the real reasons for the scene, it caused panic in the room.

Once again, Dubcek almost collapsed. He was trembling and talked nervously and almost incoherently. The doctors appeared and prepared to give him some injections, but Dubcek fended them off, saying he wanted nothing. Suddenly, to everyone's horror, he declared: "I won't sign it then! Let them do what they want, I won't sign it." Some — including Cernik, Svoboda and Smrkovsky — rushed over to him and all began talking at once to persuade him that he couldn't refuse to sign it now, that there was nothing to be done. I too thought at this point the negotiations could no longer be turned around in this way and moreover I was convinced that this sudden

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change of mind was a result of Dubcek's momentary mental state and that he would soon change it back again. I spoke with him briefly and told him so. All of us took turns trying to persuade him to reconsider so the talks could continue. Dubcek listened to us, offered no resistance, but would not change his stand. To all my arguments he merely replied: "Can't you see them? They have no idea what they've done" and then he repeated, "I won't sign it."

It was Dubcek's most clear-headed moment. Perhaps if he had taken part in our meeting the night before and taken the same position, he might have had substantial influence on the course of the talks. Now, of course, it was too late. Finally he allowed himself to be given a tranquilizing injection and after a second round of pressure, he finally succumbed.

Before that, there was feverish activity on both sides to try to get the talks started again. Both Svoboda and Cernik and others from the reform wing, and Bil'ak and Jakes left the room and went into some kind of ante-chamber where Suslov, Ponomaryov and perhaps others appeared. Svoboda was at last received by Brezhnev and they worked something out together. This entire incident interrupted the talks for about an hour. When they got under way again, it was already late in the evening.

From this point on, the talks were not very dramatic. The text of the protocol was examined paragraph by paragraph, and in general the Soviet side was more yielding than before. I can't recall precisely everything that was changed in the wording in this final phase, but two important formulations were arrived at: the departure of the troops after their "temporary" stationing in Czechoslovakia on the understanding that this departure would depend upon the progress of "normalization"; and second, a formulation whereby the Soviet side would support the line expressed in the January and May plenary sessions of the Central Committee of the CPCz. On this point, a debate broke out concerning the April plenary session, when the Action Program of the CPCz was approved. Just as he did in Bratislava, Brezhnev refused on stylistic grounds the suggestion that a hyphen instead of an "and" be placed between "January and June" plenary sessions, which would have included by implication the April plenum. In the end, however, he said quite openly: There are several formulations in the Action Program which the Soviet Politburo does not consider correct and therefore it will not sign anything that could be construed as agreement with this program. And in any case, he said, it must be clear even to us that certain things in the program need changing. The Soviet Politburo, on the other hand, expressly supported the May resolution, in which the Action Program was not only recognized as correct, but also declared to be the basic party line. At the same time, however, that resolution makes concrete references to forces inimicable to socialism. The Soviets won their point and thus the "Moscow protocol" contained no explicit approval of the Action Program of the CPCz.

Sometime around midnight it was all completed and the moment of signing came. Suddenly a huge door flew open and about ten photographers and cameramen stampeded into the room. As if on command, the entire Soviet

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Politburo rose to its feet and each of them leaned across the table to his Czechoslovak opposite number with his arms stretched wide, ready to embrace him. It was an absurd scene that illuminated the photographers flash guns: dozens of arms belonging to members of the Soviet Politburo stretched and waved across the table in a row, and I suddenly imagined that a fantastic, carnivorous plant was trying to entrap us in its sticky tendrils. Instead of standing up and making a similar gesture in response, I pushed my legs against the trestle of the conference table and the chair in which I was sitting skidded backward over the polished parquet floor toward the wall about three meters behind me. I came to rest beside Ambassador Koucky, sitting by the wall along with those for whom there was no room at the table. Koucky had an expression of undisguised alarm in his eyes and he hissed under his breath, "Have you gone mad?" I admitted that was possible, but said the main thing was I didn't want to hug anyone, that I simply couldn't bring myself to do it. Meanwhile, the act of collective embracing had been completed, documented in pictures.

Then the main representatives of both sides were immortalized as they signed the protocol. And immediately after that, just as abruptly as they had come, the photographers and cameramen were ushered out of the room and the doors closed behind them. Then I heard Podgorny's voice across the table suddenly say, "And Comrade Mlynar is not going to sign?" So he had noticed my escape: indeed, he scarcely could have missed it, since I was sitting directly across from him and it was entirely possible that his embrace had been aimed at me. The others, who had noticed nothing amiss yet, suddenly began looking around to see what was the matter with me. I said I would sign, then stood up and added my signature to the death sentence for democratic communist reform in Czechoslovakia.

The relief that comes at the end of every suspenseful activity — whether tragedy or comedy — came at the end of the signing ceremony as well. Shortly afterward, however, the tension returned, quickly reminding us what the realities of our situation were. The episode was connected with the departure of Kriegel, and it belongs more properly in a gangster novel. But it happened during official talks in the Kremlin, which, in the words of the communique, took place in a "comradely and friendly atmosphere."

When the technical aspects of our departure for Prague were being discussed, someone remarked that it would be necessary to arrange for Kriegel to be brought to the Kremlin so that he could fly back with our delegation. Brezhnev responded to the remark himself and said that it would be better if Kriegel were not to fly back to Prague with the delegation. "Leave him here for now," Brezhnev said. "He didn't sign the protocol and he'll make trouble for you." Dubcek and perhaps Svoboda reacted quite sharply to this and insisted that the delegation would return to Prague in its entirety. Brezhnev, however, continued to insist and went on about how Kriegel would sabotage the protocol, how he would flaunt the fact that he had not signed it and organize opposition to the "consolidation effort."

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I think that behind all this there was a scenario that even Brezhnev himself was sticking to. Suddenly we all realized that Kriegel was in fact still under arrest, that he was merely a hostage and not a delegate-hostage, as we were. Brezhnev himself spoke of Kriegel as though he were a prisoner who had nothing to do with us. Ludvik Svoboda said that after the return to Prague he would arrange for Kriegel and his wife to stay in Lany. Brezhnev understood this as an offer on Svoboda's part to have Kriegel locked up in some fancy prison and remarked: "But he'll escape! Which of you can act as a guarantor for him?"

In other words, they did not want a ransom for the hostage: the gang's boss required a personal guarantor, just like in the detective stories. Quite spontaneously and without agreeing on it beforehand, three of us offered to provide the guarantee: Spacek, Simon and I. But that was not enough, and thus behind-the-scenes negotiations to free Kriegel started. Dubcek, Svoboda, Cernik and Smrkovsky went into the next room with the leadership of the Soviet Politburo and worked on the problem behind closed doors. As far as I can recall, even Jakes — probably through some of his contacts, which probably led right up to the police sector of the main group in charge of stage-managing the whole affair — tried to gain Kriegel's release. The result was a shameful agreement that was once again demeaning to Kriegel: the prisoner would be delivered directly to the airport; he would not be allowed back inside the Kremlin.

After all this, the Kremlin potentates now suggested an informal, friendly gathering before we flew back to Prague. Jovial behavior does not sit particularly well on Kosygin but he began to make jokes and refer to an old Russian custom whereby intimate guests cannot leave their host's home until they have sat down together and drunk a glass in parting. I recalled reading somewhere about a Mongolian tribe that held prisoners who were especially dear to them in their yurts: they would pierce the soles of prisoners' feet with horse-hair, which would then heal in the skin and not bother the prisoners at all unless they wanted to get up and run away. The custom evoked by Kosygin for detaining guests was far more humane and so we all sat down with our hosts.

The gathering lasted about an hour and it evolved into conversations in small groups of two or three. It was interesting. Kosygin came up to me and after a few conversational phrases asked whether I thought it was realistic to expect the fulfillment of the protocol, where I saw potential problems and what my view was of certain people in the leadership. The conversation gradually focused on this last point and I realized that this was Kosygin's way of probing my real attitude. It was simpler and more reliable than a conversation on political ideology. What I thought about "socialism with a human face" did not tell him as much as what I thought about Cernik, Husak or Indra.

I told Kosygin very openly that in my opinion it would be disastrous for the future if the Moscow Politburo were to depend for its main support on the

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people who were to have created a "revolutionary government" in August — and I named Bil'ak and Indra. "Oh, those people," said Kosygin, waving his hand contemptuously. And then he began to lavish praise on Husak. Perhaps he was trying to make it easier for me to tell which way the wind was blowing. He in no way disputed my point that the main problem now would be to avoid extremes on both ends of the spectrum. I told him in so many words that Kriegel, Cisar, Pavel, Hajek and others could only be dropped if other people who had been utterly compromised in August were to go, too. I got the impression that Kosygin was banking on a rapid defusing of the whole situ ation and that therefore his view was consistent with how we saw the possible compromise working.

The next day, however, when we were already back in Prague, I learned from Dubcek that Brezhnev had demanded of him, as a condition for any further good relations, that Bil'ak and Indra keep their party functions.

Brezhnev and other members of the Soviet Politburo accompanied us to the airport where another official farewell took place, also immortalized by the cameras. Kriegel was sitting in the waiting aircraft as promised. About 2 in the morning, August 27, the plane took off. Once again, we all sat silently as we had on the way there, but this time it was for different reasons. Now we were all wondering how the people at home would react to the "Moscow protocol." And I don't think any of us had many rosy illusions about that.

JORGE SEMPRUN
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF FEDERICO SANCHEZ AND THE COMMUNIST UNDERGROUND IN SPAIN

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TOWARD A POST-MACHIAVELLIAN POLITICS

by Ferenc Feher

The political science professor in *Fail Safe* who irresponsibly advised his government in predicting the death of 60 million to 100 million people, arrogantly answered inquiries about the moral foundation of his politics by saying, "I am not a poet, I am a political scientist." Something, however, has changed after World War II and this has turned the set of political principles characterized as "Machiavellian realism" into dangerous and irresponsible dreams that work in the short run but lead the world to the brink of disaster in the longer term.

What can be called Machiavellianism shared the theoretical fate of Marxism. The process by which both became "isms" was also a process of dilution. Thus, for example, the famous slogan "the end justifies the means" was never uttered by Machiavelli himself, who simply stated that every politics needs its own adequate means. Accordingly, means that are atrocious from a human viewpoint can be adequate within a tyrannical framework.

The Aristotelian greatness of Machiavellianism is that it was *consciously based on a new anthropology*. Only recently has political theory been degraded into a value-free "science." Every significant innovation in political theory has confronted the question concerning what man is. The "Machiavellian" answer anticipates Hobbes: *homo est homini lupus*. Man is governed by two basic passions: self-interest and fear. This is not merely conventional wisdom, but a set of principles. Politicians who disregard this anthropology will fail.

Secondly, Machiavellianism always means the acceptance of the strong nation-state as the fundamental political entity as opposed to spiritual world-communities such as Christendom, in which the legitimation is entirely other-worldly; medieval empires like the Holy Roman Empire in which the principle of legitimation is *fictitiously* traditional; and local communities defined by geographical location and self-imposed limitations. A strong nation-state is a modern formation with efficiency as its principle of legitimation: efficiency defending the new state against neighboring rivals — an activity that defines the formation of and imposes the legal regulation of the new absolutism on the population.

Thirdly, Machiavellianism elaborates the techniques required by the rulers of the strong nation-state. First, there is the law of action: if armed prophets *always* win, unarmed prophets *always* lose. In addition, these techniques are strictly "scientific" in the modern positivist sense of *ideological neutrality*. In fact, the reason why both Hitlerism and Stalinism are post-Machiavellian is that they were strongly influenced by their respective ideologies. And, finally, in opposition to its medieval counterpart, Machiavellian politics remains irreligious: it ranges from a practical indifference towards religion to outright atheism.

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Fourthly, according to Machiavellian political wisdom, the strong nation-state *is never a free state*, i.e., it is never a democracy. But this does not mean that modern democracies do not use Machiavellian techniques. On the contrary, modern representative democracy employs Machiavellian techniques in two typical ways. On the one hand, it constantly uses it "abroad" in colonies, temporarily occupied territories, etc., and in emergency situations at home as well. On the other hand, there are constant tendencies *within* any parliamentary system either to transform a representative democracy into a *Bonapartist-presidential system* (DeGaulle's Machiavellian personality is the clearest example) or to *tacitly misuse* the advantages offered by the combination of a powerful administrative position in an exceptional world situation to transform a representative system into a Machiavellian regime.[1] In this sense, Machiavellian techniques have a double meaning: they can be techniques for the absolutist ruler or for the "tyranny of freedom" — a forerunner of the "dictatorship of the proletariat." Thus, the genuine Machiavellian prince is Napoleon himself. It is impossible to tell, in Napoleon's case, where the continuation of the absolutist princes ends and where the new "revolutionary dictator" begins: he was both. His cruelties were efficient. They were economically designed for the "necesssary" amount of intimidation without self-gratification and sadism. His promotion of individualism in the form of enthusiastic bureaucratic ladder-climbing while discouraging his subjects from seeking civil liberties encouraged the other Machiavellian passion: egoism. His cynical indifference towards all ideology was in perfect harmony with the original doctrine. The only Machiavellian principle he ignored in expanding the nation-state, already satisfactorily defended at Marengo, into a pseudo-medieval Empire.

The last feature of Machiavellianism is its *specific way of functioning as an ethics*. Although techniques are important, they have limitations. Techniques imply an *unchanged* context with *unchangeable* laws and constant results. That is why Machiavellianism presupposed an *unchanging* human nature and a *cyclical* view of history. Since history does not repeat itself, however, the validity of "general" political techniques must be very limited. More important, therefore, is the role of Machiavellianism as the *ethics of homo politicus* in an era where the divine origin of power was no longer a dogma but only a pretension. While Oriental or Roman despotism *spontaneously* produced the "predatory" type of *homo politicus* who was instinctively ready to sacrifice human lives, in the modern period that has to be *learned* through Machiavellian ethics. There were two kinds of "education to political life." One is exemplified by the education of Ivan the Terrible who was convinced by his confidential adviser that only a system of widespread terror is consistent with autocracy. The other is exemplified by the education of Henri IV from his careless youth to the role of the iron-fisted but tolerant ruler and supreme

1. This is precisely what *all* American presidents have done from Roosevelt on, and it is precisely what backfired in Nixon's case. Nixon was not sufficiently clear-sighted to understand that whoever demolishes the exceptional world situation or at least begins this work (detente was initiated by him), cannot retain the prerogatives associated with that same situation.

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educator" of a nation. In both cases, Machiavellian ethics brought out the very principles of rule and reinforced what was only implicit in these respective personalities.

On the other hand, the role of Machiavellian ethics is *rarely admitted in public*. Machiavellianism is usually a *Schimpfwort* that no one ascribes to. Among Shakespeare's Machiavellian heroes, only the self-conscious Richard III sought to be a villain and was ready to admit that he imitated the "murderous Machiavel." All other disciplies of Machiavelli bypass the fact in silence. This uneasiness about *public commitments* to Machiavellian ethics shows not only the *refutability of its anthropology*, but also the possibility of realizing in principle Kant's higher maxim: a world in which human beings are not mere means for others.

Machiavellianism has been uninterruptedly the secret but leading political doctrine for the last three centuries[2]— notwithstanding the fact that it has had traditional opponents such as the Catholic Church, which banned Machiavelli's writings because of their irreligious character, and certain naive Enlightenment thinkers who believed in the goodness" of human nature and were consequently disillusioned at every historical turn. There has also been a *pseudo-opposition* to Machiavellianism. Its proponents, according to Gramsci, denounce Machiavelli in order to practice his precepts all the better. A typical case is Frederick the Great, whose approach can be characterized by his statement, Gott ist immer mit den stärkeren Batallionen" and whose principle of military order was that soldiers should dread their sergeants' stick rather than the enemy's bayonet.

This century has produced a new advocate and different oppositions. The new advocate is Gramsci. Much better than Lenin, this brilliant Jacobin clarified the principles of his own politics, *defined himself as a Jacobin,* linked Machiavelli with the Jacobin tradition, and sided with the New Prince understood as the repository of the *collective* will to power: the Party. While this innovation is intellectually unique and brilliant, the deed itself is regressive, unintentionally indicating how radically Leninism belongs to the realm of what Marxists call prehistory." Although the tone is self-assured, it conceals a resignation over the fact that the *Ordine Nuovo* dream of a spontaneous proletarian revolution creating a system of direct democracy proved to be an illusion. In this sense, it is reminiscent of the resignation behind the similarly self-assured tone of *History and Class Consciousness.*

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2. This period ends with World War II and whith Churchill as the last great Machiavellian statesman in the old style. While Machiavellianism includes Lenin's politics, it does not encompass Hitler's and Stalin's regimes. Lenin, who ruled in the name of the proletariat's "collective interest," was a direct descendant of Marat's Machiavellian "tyranny of freedom." Both Stalin and Hitler are post-Machiavellian because, as already indicated, they were *ideologically* committed and rejected the ideologically indifferent doctrine of Machiavellianism. Another basic difference is the *expansionist* character of both Hitler's and Stalin's systems, which cannot tolerate any competition. These are systems of world-domination and, as such, are beyond Machiavellianism, which applies only to strong nation-states.

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There are basically two new types of opposition. One is motivated by despair over the fate of democracy. This type owes more to basic moral passions than to logical argument and its anthropology is a simple consequence of desperate political decisions. The typical case is Trotsky. When he joined the Bolshevik revolution, he brushed aside everything he knew about man and even advocated (in his polemics against Kautsky) that man is a lazy animal who has to be coerced into working. This was, of course, the secret anthropological doctrine of Bolshevik Machiavellianism and Trotsky caused great consternation by revealing its underlying premises. But when he realized that what he called Stalinist bureaucracy nullified all efforts to establish democracy, he changed radically and condemned "Stalinist Machiavellianism" out of a moral outrage in favor of a new anthropology of individual self-perfection.

The second type of opposition is typified by Lukacs in his 1918-19 writings before and during the Hungarian revolution. *Realpolitik* — Lukacs' term for Machiavellianism — is the adequate means for establishing the domination of one class over another precisely because of its inhuman character. At the same time, revolutionary politics cannot and should not be *Realpolitik*. If proletarian rule becomes simply the rule of one class over all others, history merely repeats itself. Yet, the fact remains that the possibility of a post-Machiavellian politics does not follow from this. So the hope for a non-Machiavellian policy remains abstract: it is an ought which, in the final analysis, is just as helpless as the philosophically more substantial moral despair.

World War II changed the course of world history so drastically that it caught by surprise the leading bureaucracies, which were still applying the traditional maxims of Machiavellianism to a post-Machiavellian situation. This does not mean that human nature has improved — at least not in the century of Auschwitz, the Gulag and Hiroshima — nor that politicians behave "irrationally," and that they were more stupid than the man on the street. Politicians, if anything, are generally somewhat better than average. In this case, politicians did not act irrationally, but according to a traditional Machiavellian logic that was no longer adequate to the new situation.[3]

3. While politicians are at the beginning of such a "re-learning process" they have so much power to make decisions affecting the whole world that there has to be an abysmal gap between their possibilities and their instinctive modes of behavior. Indeed, this re-learning process cannot be completed without reference to the "man on the street" who also has to accept what some philosophers nowadays call planetary responsibility. This all may sound very naive for the politicians who are "not poets but scientific experts in their craft" and who regularly bring the world to the brink of catastrophe by sticking to their narrow-minded rationalism with its obsolete categories. But without a new philosophy that will become the conviction and daily practice of large masses and without the triumph of democracy (where there is tyrannical rule), and its transformation and intensification (where it already exists), the pragmatic political problem cannot be resolved. It is undlerstandable that Churchill, the last great representative of the old school, believed that in Yalta and Potsdam he concluded a new Westphalian Treaty or a new Holy Alliance. But subsequent British imperial activity in a complete historical vacuum showed unmistakably that the period of grandiose pragmatism was gone forever. The "smart tricks,"

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Basically, this is common sense. Perhaps, this is why it is so much despised by political experts. The world has become one interconnected whole — even if only in a negative sense. In other words, the unity of the world is constituted exclusively by technology: telecommunication, teledetection, missiles, bombs, and military facilities. For the first time in history, the world has become a *system* in that *every* "dysfunction" in each part affects the functioning of the whole. Because of this, for the first time in history, the system as a whole can be destroyed.[4]

This interconnectedness is negative in that it implies the danger of the total destruction of the system, and it is an interconnectedness endured by the people of the world rather than lived or acted out. This does not mean that people are hostile or indifferent toward the proverbial benefits of modern technology. It does mean that even though the world is technologically interconnected and economically interdependent, it is *not* going to become *unified* and is increasingly becoming a system of *reciprocal* blackmail. Furthermore, the technologically unified world includes a variety of conflicting lifestyles which exclude one another. Its constituents are in fact an outwardly intolerant group of capitalist democracies that never gave up the idea of world domination; Soviet-type totalitarian systems that, under the heading of "revolutionary world process," openly profess it; and Third-World tyrannies.[5]

The new system of superpowers invalidated the key concept of Machiavellian politics: the strong nation-state. The only statesman to realize this and draw political consequences from it has been Henry Kissinger. Kissinger's neo-Metternichian conception of detente implied a close collaboration between two, perhaps three, superpowers. The world-state based on collective partnership is post-Machiavellian in that it is beyond the nation-state. But in all other respects Kissinger's conception either retained principles based on Machiavellian anthropology (fear and interest as the exclusive political motivations) or it ignored new realities such as that the partners of the new Holy Alliance could not be lastingly reconciled precisely

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"unexpected moves" and innumerable attempts to "outwit" others can help in the short run to obtain glory for certain statesmen and resolve certain crises, but they bring no lasting solution. And since the whole system is overloaded with tension, one can never tell which "smart move" will actually bring it to the point of no return. Perhaps it is only in this ultimate sense that we can speak of the irrationality of politics or about the deficiency of a rationalism that is no longer capable of rendering rational the system to which it has been applied.

4. Even if "optimistic" predictions such as Chairman Mao's at the 1959 Communist World Conference prove to be wrong — and one can argue whether the whole or only 40 or 60 percent of it will be destroyed by a nuclear holocaust — it is not possible to begin anew. Given that fact, the only rational assumption is that the destruction would be total.

5. If "capitalist democracies" did not give up the dream of world domination, it does not mean, especially in the case of the United States, that world domination is a "secret plot" on the part of the government. In 1961 Kennedy had to warn an overzealous population in the following well-chosen and realistic words: "We must face the fact that the United States is neither omnipotent nor omniscient — that we are only 6 percent of the world's population — that we cannot impose our will on the other 94 percent of mankind — that we cannot right every wrong nor reverse each adversity — and that therefore there cannot be an American solution for every problem."

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because they were expansionist systems aiming at world domination. In this sense, Kissinger's "supreme realism" proved to be a negative utopia.

The most important changes in the post-Machiavellian era are the following: First, there can no longer be a domestic policy separate from foreign policy. This interconnectedness of domestic and foreign policy does not imply a fusion of two disparate power technologies. Even if Machiavellian techniques had been invented solely for domestic affairs, those applied in foreign affairs are rarely more than extensions of the principles of the former. Rather, it means that the new political actors take on planetary responsibility whenever they take a stand on local affairs. Although this new constellation could be a springboard for emancipatory political activity, in its present form it mostly implies an exceptional burden for unschooled local politicians.

Second, the world is no longer flexible: there is not enough elbow room for competitive partners. Obviously, this stems from the system itself based as it is on the ubiquitous and constantly interfering superpowers. Modern technology also contributes tremendously to this rigidification of the world. Because of the universal character of modern science, modern technology cannot be kept secret, so that even if sophisticated modern armaments had not been unrestrictedly distributed by leading industrial countries, smaller countries could always accumulate enough retaliatory capacity to invalidate 19th-century diplomacy. Furthermore, several of the major products of modern technology, such as armaments of mass destruction, can be manufactured even by a country whose general technological level is relatively backward. Thus, it is not surprising that India has atomic bombs. Guevarra formulated the new revolutionary potentials of precisely this situation when he demanded a hundred Vietnams." Even superpowers cannot bear the burdens of many Vietnams in this rigid world: they can destroy Vietnams only if they use their technological arsenal to the utmost — even if that risks nuclear world war — but they cannot pacify them in the traditional 19th-century imperialistic manner.

Third, a number of military concepts can no longer be employed in foreign policy since they exact too high a price. For example, to use certain countries tactically simply to increase the distance between the enemy and some target in the homeland costs politically much more than any precautionary measure should be worth. The classic example is Soviet policy with regard to Eastern Europe. Immediately after the war, the victorious Soviet leadership thought only in terms of a possible *traditional* war. The example they constantly referred to was the use of the captured Finnish territories to slow down the German thrust toward Leningrad. But they could have used the Eastern European countries as political (or even military) buffer states without direct occupation involving the constant presence of a huge army and an inextinguishable source of political tension. Again, it is already conventional wisdom in American foreign policy that Castro's conversion to the Soviet model at the time of the Cuban crisis was far from completed and that it largely depended on the American attitude that preferred to bring the world to the brink of a nuclear war for the sake of very narrow military

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considerations. In fact, for more than a decade, this resulted in a policy in Latin American that lent support to brutal tyrannies while pushing Castro further into Eastern-European style totalitarianism.

Even the famous maxim about the ends justifying the means lost its original validity. While it was true from the viewpoint of Machiavellian techniques, it no longer applies in a world of superpowers seeking world domination with the technological means for doing so. But these very means cannot be used except at the price of destroying all subjects. Whatever one may think of this maxim, it was central for Machiavellianism but it no longer applies.

All these modifications change the concept and function of imperialism. Whatever one learned from Hobson, Hilferding, Luxemburg and Lenin about imperialism, it no longer exists on the political map — although there are still cases such as the overthrow of the Arbentz government in Guatemala where it was clearly a huge American corporation that pushed various U.S. government departments into action. But how is a Marxist to interpret the most crucial event of recent American history: the Vietnam war? None of the usual categories applies. The war did not serve the interests of any powerful capital group. Indo-China had not been a privileged center of American investments or the site of any indispensable source of raw materials. Nor can the war be simply explained in terms of the interests of the huge armament manufacturing complexes. In Indo-China the U.S. did not defend any particular capitalist democracy but its way of life *as a totality*. Despite the admittedly pragmatic character of American political life, U.S. foreign policy reveals totalizing imperial aspirations. The weaknesses of American foreign policy which have become so obvious in the last ten years are not the result of any lack of international experience. That could have been true during and immediately after World War II and, indeed, a man of exceptional political genius in domestic affairs, such as Roosevelt, consistently ignored real power relations abroad. But after more than thirty years' experience in the administration of the greater part of the world, it is clear that this is no longer the case. The root of this evil is the totalizing conception.

The totalizing principle entails that it is enough for the whole to be free and democratic: the parts can be governed by the worst tyranny as in the case of many Latin-American countries, South Korea or the Iran of the shah. Somehow, these tyrannies are seen as serving the cause of democracy. In espionage fiction, the latest and culturally most important branch of popular literature, the moral consequences are clearly spelled out: *every means is admissible* in keeping the 'totality" intact — a value shared by communist and anti-communist agents alike. Once again, it was the unhesitatingly cynical Kissinger who formulated the pertinent maxim: Safety has priority over freedom." One is tempted to quote Benjamin Franklin in reply: "Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety." One could answer that Kissinger's maxim was not meant to give up any essential freedoms at home: only *abroad*. Yet, since the U.S. began its imperial mission, American democracy — from McCarthyism to Watergate — has been threatened at home to an unprecedented extent.

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The priority of safety over freedom does not remain abroad, but eventually comes home. Also, America's tyrannical allies "in the service of democracy" have specific weaknesses. As with their Eastern European colleagues during their worst periods, they are exposed to the wrath of the population. But whereas in the case of Eastern European upheavals, the U.S. does not interfere, in the case of Asian, African and future Latin-American coups, the Soviet Union and China do. Thus, the United States finds itself involved in devastating and expensive wars to defend democracy through its tyrannical representatives.

There are even fewer doubts about Soviet imperialism and its aims at the homogenization of the world and the denial of any other way of life. Thus, the protectors of such brutal regimes as in Ethiopia are as far from being "exporters of freedom" as are the Chinese protectors of Pol Pot. The question here, however, is the *specifically ideological character* of Soviet imperialism. Although there are undoubtedly a number of instances of Soviet "exploitation" of occupied countries, the situation is closer to the one described by the *Les Temps Modernes* collective in its special 1956 Hungarian issue. Their argument there was that the Soviet Union does not exploit Eastern European countries in the sense that it forcibly requisitions the goods produced in those countries for home consumption. Rather, the Soviet Union imposes an economic model on these countries that is alien to their traditions, natural resources and the popular will in order to create homogeneity and thus serve the goals of Soviet imperialism. One need only examine the Czech and East German armanent industry in the service of Soviet expansionism. In this sense, the occupied territories are part of a general plan of "outflanking" the capitalist world system. There seem to be totalizing features in Soviet imperialist ideology in that it employs outright anti-Communist forces if it serves its interests. But in a perverted way, Soviet Machiavellianism has confidence only in tyrannical systems. Its weakness stems from the fact that, instead of food or modern consumer goods, the only things it delivers to occupied territories is sophisticated weapons.

According to early 20th-century theories of imperialism, these types of ideological imperialisms are not "imperialist" in the strict sense. First of all, these examples are continuations of ancient imperial politics in the sense that they unite by coercion, pressure or interest vast areas that have become dependent on the center. Secondly, they attempt to unite incompatible lifestyles. And thirdly, they have world domination as their explicit objective. As such, they extend Machiavellian policies in a basically post-Machiavellian world.

Finally, from an economic viewpoint, the nation-state, the key unit of Keynesian economics, has ceased to function as the ultimate unit of economic life. This is the result of the separation of industrial centers from the natural resources they depend on. In a world without colonies, where the economic dependence of the weaker is mitigated by an increasing number of counter-pressures, including blackmail, and where power diplomacy can be administered only with the utmost caution if at all, the separation of industry

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and resources represents one of the major factors contributing to a long-lasting world crisis. Of course, colonizing civilizations cannot very well speak about "blackmail" since it is clear that exploited countries are trying to seek some form of retribution for their centuries-long exploitation. Here, however, neither moralizing invectives nor forcible attempts at retribution can help. When the ex-colonies try to blackmail Western industrial civilization, they only borrow the impracticable Machiavellian philosophy of their ex-masters. Unfortunately, the response is conceived in the same way. The reckless fantasies of various secret services regarding "punitive actions" against oil countries in 1973, indicate the kind of rationality one can expect in the future. Here, too, however, the collapse of Western industrial civilization is only in the interest of the world's most tyrannical and economically underdeveloped regimes. Furthermore, it is impossible without the total destruction of the world. Since the subjugation of countries possessing raw materials is just as impracticable, a world of rational reciprocity is not simply a pious wish, but an economic necessity.

The main conclusion from all this is that the changed world situation is not the result of a changed "human nature." Rather, the world has become an interconnected system which is no longer internally flexible, but unstable and burdened with tensions that could result in the system's destruction. This changed situation demands a different mode of behavior to avoid collective suicide. This different mode of behavior, on the other hand, makes possible the diffusion of the often-mentioned "planetary responsibility" as a basic new human propensity. Finally, whereas interest cannot be eliminated from political practice, the supreme principle should not be conflicting interests, but the acknowledgement of all needs, with the possible exception of the need to oppress.

If the present suicidal stage of policy making is to be transcended, it is necessary to go beyond tyrannies that defend Western democracy and dictatorships which pretend to be "at the same time the maximum of democracy." Socialists have to avoid Machiavellianism instead of introducing its elements into domestic policy as the German Social-Democrats did. Why is it crucial to defend democracy as such? First of all, because the realization of all the principles of the Declaration of Independence is *identical* with the realization of socialist ideals, whereas *every dictatorship* — whether Leninist, Stalinist, or post-Stalinist — distorts socialist ideals and hampers their realization. Second, *every new dictatorship only adds* to the threat of an explosion within a world system already overloaded with tension. Third and finally, on a democratic basis, socialism can be and repeatedly has been defeated. An absolute guarantee can only be provided by a dictatorship that corrupts the very ideals of socialism. On a democratic basis, the labor of socialism can always begin again, whereas in dictatorships this recommencement is *practically* prevented by tyrannical authorities claiming to be the sole heirs of socialism. It is this possibility of beginning again that counts: socialism is labor and not a static condition guaranteed by coercion.

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THE ITALIAN CRISIS AND THE ROLE OF THE LEFT

by Antonio Carlo*

Theories of the Italian Crisis

The role of the Italian Left must be analyzed in terms of the causes of the Italian crisis. There are three main accounts of the economic crisis. It can be seen as a result of: (a) labor struggles and subsequent rises in labor cost; (b) the growing instability of the Italian economy caused by inadequate planning; and (c) Italy becoming an underdeveloped country.

(a) Strangely enough, both reformists and *ouvrieristes* share the first interpretation. Allegedly, after 1969 the working class made demands that the system could not meet. Why did this happen in 1969? And why is the system in crisis now, while it successfully met a similar challenge in 1962-63? The crisis' structural causes are thus displaced by socio-political ones such as the workers' rebellion, which suddenly emerged in 1969. In addition, the facts provided to support the claim that labor demands are impossible to meet (within capitalism) are completely inadequate. The 1962-63 struggles were related to the system's rationalization. From 1948 to 1961, the difference between real wages and productivity had grown into a wide chasm, and thus curtailed consumption. Drastic wage increases were needed to come up to normal European levels. This income redistribution was not unwelcome by industry since the wage increases stimulated an otherwise impossible consumption of, e.g., cars. Despite strikes, productivity increased to a never again reached level of 7 percent per year so that 1962 and 1963 were not only years of struggle, but also of expansion. Why was there a recession in 1964-65? Graziani located its causes in agricultural backwardness and the inability to meet rising demands. As a result, imports increased, there was a crisis in the balance of payments, and the *lira* was weakened. To control consumption, the government intervened with a drastic cutback in credit. The result was a recession that had little to do with labor struggles.

Once the balance of payments stabilized in March 1965, the Italian economy began to recover. Production and productivity increased, although at a lower pace than in the early 1960s; profits and prices again rose, while wages remained unchanged since the working class, tried by the recession, was on the defensive. Although conditions existed for growth, investments slacked off and a remarkable share of Italian savings was exported. This phenomenon was subsequently ascribed to labor struggles between 1964 and 1968 — years of drastic control of labor struggles and of economic recovery. At any rate, during the 1969 challenge, the stagnation of investments was independent of labor struggles.

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*Translated by Vicky Totah and Eleni Mahaira-Odoni.

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Between 1969 and 1975, income from dependent work increased from about 60 percent to 70 percent of the total (68.4 percent in 1978) — a figure much lower than the Common Market average during those years. Meanwhile, consumption increased by only 2.9 percent per year (1971-76), half as much as in previous years (1966-70). In May 1976, the Union of Swiss Banks in Zurich reported that a Milanese skilled worker had a net monthly income of about 324,000 lire, 308,000 of which was spent for food and rent. Except for London, which was on a similar level, Milan, Italy's wealthiest town, had average wages lower than even Athens and Madrid, capitals of countries with low industrial development. Thus, the data provided by the Italian Statistics Institute showing "uncontrollable" increases in wages is phony. To begin with, workers' income is computed to include social welfare contributions, which make up a third of the total. This is not income, but rather a cost of production. Furthermore, in Italy the welfare system is one of the pillars of Christian Democrat power, which explains the enormous welfare waste and the fact that in Italy it is more expensive than the Common Market average and has grown pathologically between 1970 and 1975, when real income increased by 10 points and social welfare contributions by 20 points. The statistics also fail to take into account tax evasion, which in Italy is a very serious problem. If one adds to capital income (salaried and wage workers cannot evade taxes), the various points of the gross national product that are thus hidden, statistics would change considerably. Finally, the state's redistribution through taxes and public spending also has to be taken into account. Fuà himself (one of the main supporters of the criticized thesis) claims that the "poor capitalists" survive because the state re-directs wealth from workers to finance capital. This maneuver is an old one that has only intensified during the last few years. The 1974 tax reforms have increased withholdings from workers' income, while the struggle against tax evasion by capitalists is on all the governments' agendas, but hardly ever comes to anything. Clearly, the 1969-75 redistribution was not all that harsh on capital.

Finally, it is claimed that labor costs in Italy are so high that they are non-competitive. Since the average cost of commodities is a function of the relation between labor costs and productivity, if the latter is low, the cost of commodities can be high — even in a situation of low wages (as is the case in the Third World). Since labor costs (i.e., direct wages) are low, the weak point is productivity, which is not very dynamic. Why is productivity stagnating? Productivity is a function of investments and of the introduction of advanced technology. Since for 15 years investments have levelled off and even decreased, it is clear that the Italian industrial apparatus is becoming obsolete, non-competitive, and unable to generate high productivity.

(b) The second interpretation of the crisis is advanced by parts of the reformist left (mostly the Italian Communist Party) which, in the last five or six years, has been influenced by the theory of the determining impact of high labor costs. Yet, between the late 1960s and the early 1970s, the lack of adequate planning had been blamed as the cause of the crisis. Even before the

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June 3, 1979, elections, Berlinguer reiterated this argument after the Communist Party had accepted the need to contain labor costs. The objective of this position was clearly political: there are structural contradictions resolvable through serious policies. Thus, the real problem is the incompetence and corruption of the party in power (mainly, the Christian Democrats). This policy of planning and reforms proposed by the Communists is to take place within capitalism: "Investments must be profitable" and the market is determining (Amendola). Both the June 20, 1976 and the June 3, 1979, Communist electoral programs accepted uncritically the market, profits, private property, and free enterprise.

This explanation overlooks the real roots of the crisis in the very nature of capitalism and locates them at the level of inefficient political management. Thus, inflation is a fact of life in all industrial countries; tax evasion is not just an Italian idiosyncrasy, and the same could be said of unemployment and other problems. Confronted with these world trends, to blame the crisis on corruption and incompetence among Christian Democrats is simply provincial! Italian capitalism suffers to a greater extent from the structural evils of capitalism everywhere.

Consider the problem of investments in underdeveloped areas — a key problem for Italian economy where underdevelopment is no longer relegated exclusively to the South and to the islands, but affects almost all of agriculture.[1] What happened with the so-called 1971 law of "negative incentives" is typical. The aim of this measure was to force capitalists to invest in the South and in depressed areas rather than in the congested North. Capitalists who still wanted to invest in the North had to pay a high tax, i.e., the negative incentive. The entrepreneurs' reactions were harsh. It was practically stated that those investments forbidden in the North would not necessarily go South. In other words, there was a threat of the classical "strike of investments," so that the law was watered down in the drafting stage and subsequently never applied.[2] The reaction of Italian industrialists was altogether normal: if it is not profitable to invest in the underdeveloped South (for if it was, there would be no need for a law to encourage such investments), for the State's attempts to enforce certain entrepreneurial choices can only have disastrous consequences. A capitalism that leaves out of consideration the logic of profit is an absurdity and, in any case, is condemned to fail.

But if the logic of profit is accepted, some problems become unresolvable, as can be seen by the international growth of underdevelopment. The few investments that there are in depressed areas are qualitatively disastrous. Celso Furtado points out that large enterprises' investments in backward areas

1. Within Europe, Lombardy (Italy's wealthiest region) was only ranked 20th out of the 32 regions of the Common Market before the entrance of England, Ireland and Denmark.

2. In 1974, a convention was held in Naples concerning the problems of the South, and none of the participants (mainly members of the historical left) dared mention the word "negative incentives." Only three years later, the law had already been forgotten. It was almost as if they were ashamed of having sought to violate "free initiative."

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result in the so-called "tropical tree effect." Accordingly, the branch of the large enterprise mobilizes the few existing resources (e.g., capital, since local banks prefer large enterprises to local small or medium ones, and the best labor power is attracted by higher wages), and condemns local small and medium enterprises to failure. The result is similar to that produced by tropical trees, which spread their roots out over a wide area, absorbing all the available water, and thus killing all of the surrounding small plants.

Large enterprises use capital intensive technologies, which create few jobs and destroy many, thus creating problems for the local underdeveloped small and medium enterprises. This phenomenon of employment stagnation hinders the possibilities of expansion of internal market, forcing large enterprises to transfer profits acquired in the poor areas to wealthier and more expanding ones. Such phenomena are the result of the logic of profit, rather than of the individual perversity of any particular capitalist, and it has been true in the dynamic of underdevelopment during the last 70 years. Italy is no exception. The history of investments in the Italian South confirms Furtado's thesis. Alfa Sud, Italsider, the chemical factories in Sardinia and Sicily, are clear examples of tropical trees that have made a desert. Even state enterprises, which are required by law to operate according to "economically viable management" — i.e., in terms of the profit motive — have followed this trend not to seek social goals, but rather "economic" ones. Therefore, the allocations for Southern development, instead of creating jobs, have destroyed them, and the requirement that a minimum share of resources be allotted to the South (40 percent of investments of public enterprises according to the 1957 law, 60 percent according to the 1971 law), have been applied late and badly (1957 law) or almost not at all (1971 law).

Here corruption is only a small part of the picture: in capitalism, capital is invested to generate profits, rather than to create jobs or a balanced development. If even state enterprises must have an "economic" management, they will have to try to produce more with less people, and close unprofitable enterprises (even if socially useful) in favor of speculative, but more profitable ventures. Confronted with this situation, a planning policy within capitalism aiming only at regulating it is completely powerless. Thus, the problem is far more serious than the Christian Democrats' inability to govern.

Furthermore, a planning policy within capitalism requires a strong state, i.e., able to dictate decisions to capitalists. In 1973, Prodi pointed out that the Italian economy is ruled by 200 multinational enterprises, half of which were foreign.[3] Now, multinational enterprises have a blackmailing power over national states in the sense that they can always react by threatening to transfer investments abroad. A union member belonging to the Communist party has rightly argued that "multinational corporations and those enterprises operating on international levels have such means that at any time

3. There are no differences in this respect between foreign and Italian multinationals. Thus, Fiat has almost half of its employees outside Italy: the fatherland of capitalism is only the theory of profit.

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they can put pressure on any currence so as to upset exchanges, agreements, and planning in the short as well as the long run." This is a disastrous power relation which the Italian historical left does not know how to deal with. In their June 20, 1976, electoral programs, neither the Communists nor the Socialists ever mentioned the multinationals.

(c) The third explanatory hypothesis deals with the Italian economy's growing tendency toward underdevelopment. Here, "underdevelopment" does not mean a general lack of development, but the presence within international capitalism of areas and sectors that have profit rates lower than the average and which, therefore, become "underdeveloped" in relation to advanced ones. The rate of profit does not become equalized since, within monopoly capitalism, there are bottlenecks preventing that free circulation of capital that used to lead to the equalization of the profit rate at the time of entrepreneurial capitalism. The sectors that became underdeveloped are the small and medium enterprises, and agriculture, while the monopolies become the advanced sectors. Such a polarized development became obvious in Italy after 1957, when it entered the Common Market. This choice was due to the need to allow development of the monopoly sector within the national market (automobiles, chemicals, metals, etc.), i.e., those enterprises that were about to become multinationals. Such a choice created terrible problems in backward areas of the economy which could not withstand international competition.

A 1958 survey by the Turin Chamber of Commerce to evaluate the adaptability of local enterprises to the Common Market showed disastrous results: Except for Fiat, Italian enterprises were almost completely unprepared for the Common Market — and this applied to Turin, which is one of Italy's most advanced cities. Another similar survey by ISRIL 16 years later showed that the situation had not changed. In 1975, slightly more than a thousand large enterprises handled 61.3 percent of Italian exports. The trend is as impressive: in 1960 the fragmented sectors typical of the Italian economy (agriculture, textiles, food, clothing and shoes) accounted for 37.2 percent of Italian exports, which becomes 31.4 percent in 1965, 27.6 percent in 1970, 24 percent in 1975. The figures for the monopoly sectors are: 54 percent, 58.4 percent, 60.9 percent, and 63 percent, respectively. The backward sectors were emarginated within the international market while the monopoly sector expanded. A similar trend occurs at the level of production and investments: in 1970, the small and medium enterprises employing 69 percent of the workforce received 42 percent of total investments. By 1972, they accounted for only 46.7 percent of production in manufacture (against 53.3 percent by enterprises with more than 500 employees).[4]

The consequences of this were complex. At first, small and medium

4. The situation would be even worse if the clothing and shoe sectors had not held up internationally: from 5.6 percent of Italian exports in 1960, it went to 7.7 percent in 1970. This was an exceptional temporary situation. The privileged position of the Italian clothing and shoe industry within the Common Market in the 1960s was due to the fact that such production had been discontinued by most wealthy countries and the poor ones had not yet entered this sector (as they eventually did in the 1970s).

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enterprises held, and monopolies expanded gradually because entrance in the Common Market took place in stages. Towards the completion of the process, however, the situation became more serious, also because the reduction of credit related to the 1964 recession vitally affected the weakest sectors. Capital avoided investing in the weak sectors of the economy, which constituted a large part of the productive structure (more than two thirds of all employees), so that investments slacked off and savings went out of the country in search of higher profits. Small and medium enterprises were forced to resort to underwages, and such a situation froze mass consumption, which in the 1970s further discouraged investments and production. Naturally, employment declined and Italian multinationals increasingly expanded in foreign countries, away from an economic hinterland in crisis. Thus, the Italian economy came to exhibit all the symptoms of underdevelopment, with a small number of multinational enterprises employing a small labor force, but controlling most production, exports and investments, and conditioning all of the economy and a large number of small and medium enterprises becoming more and more marginal.[5] Political power is torn between the miltinationals' blackmail and the neo-protectionist demands of marginal and backward sectors. Internationally, the export of capital and low employment make the economy non-competitive, the balance of payments holds up only thanks to massive devaluations, and the marginal sectors struggle along only because of abnormal forms of black work: Italy is only a wealthier India.

This is the structural situation behind the labor struggles which began in the late 1960s. The working class refused to pay the enormous costs of growing underdevelopment, while the bourgeoisie had exhausted all possibilities of economic recovery on which the political consensus was based. This explains the country's growing socio-political instability. Labor struggles are thus very important, not as causes, but rather as effects of an economic crisis, and as indications of growing difficulties in governing the country.

The 1957 entrance into the Common Market was logical from the viewpoint of capital. At that time, Italy was modern enough in the sense that the dynamic and leading sectors of the economy needed international integration to further develop and thus prevent the country from becoming marginal even before the time that this happened. Yet, beside these leading sectors, there were other backward ones that employed most of the labor force, both in industry and agriculture. In this sense, Italy was 'almost' modern in the mid-1960s. The logical solution was thus to bet on total modernization through rapid development of the leading sectors in relation to the Common Market, while supporting through adequate reforms the backward areas and sectors. The center-left government passed a series of important laws seeking to do so, but when these laws had to be implemented, they conflicted with capital's dynamics. So, the financing provided for modernizing small and medium enterprises was diverted by banks to large enterprises, since the banks preferred expanding industries to modest ones.

5. Thus, if Fiat continues to leave Italy, 16,000 small and medium enterprises (sub-contractors) will have to close down with disastrous social and economic consequences.

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Therefore, it is the economic structure that is to be questioned rather than political power, which operates according to the normal levels of corruption within any bourgeois regime. It is not corruption or government inefficiency that hinders Italian development, but the impossibility of solving the economic dilemma of the 1960s: to remain backard through protectionism and thus be doomed to marginality, or to accept the challenge of the Common Market with the risk of exposing the Italian economy to a competition that it could not meet. The latter choice was made. At that point, however, the system's contradictions exploded, thus undercutting the "economic miracle" and preventing the achievement of necessary reforms.

The Italian Economy and the Crisis of the Common Market

The phenomena discussed in relation to Italy are typical: in all countries, the Common Market has favored the development of strong monopolistic sectors by condemning weak areas and fragmented sectors to increasing underdevelopment. In Italy, the problem has been more serious than elsewhere because backward sectors constituted the largest part of Italian enterprises (in employment, if not in output). Italy's case is thus typical of a general European trend: by the end of the 1960s it was clear that the unevenness of European integration was increasing rather than decreasing, to the point that most industrial production was concentrated in one sixth of the Common Market. Thus, it is not surprising that average per capita income among various regions varies widely — as much as one to seven.

Equally symptomatic is France's case, where small and medium enterprises employed about half of the working population. By 1964, these enterprises carried out 39.8 percent of all economic activities; in 1971, the figure had fallen to 29.7 percent. Thus, as in Italy's case, unemployment and imbalances increased, the economy's competitiveness fell, while moonlighting and sub-standard wage labor re-emerged as security valves.

This extremely serious problem should lead advocates of European unity to ask themselves whether the continent's political unification can be realistically entertained in the foreseeable future. Furthermore, it is well known that there are savage conflicts among states concerning agricultural or regional policy and that, for example, at the first sign of recession in Germany, foreign workers are the first to be fired — so that Italy and other countries exporting labor power also pay for the German crisis under the blessings of European brotherhood. It is also well known that there are well-disguised economic wars among various Common Market states, etc. Thus, behind all the publicity concerning European unity, there is a series of growing conflicts where particular interests and centrifugal forces clearly seem to prevail. The source of all this lies in the phenomenon of unbalanced growth that splits Europe between strong states (Germany and Benelux) and weak ones (France and Italy). Weak countries, whose economies have not been able to withstand competition, are subject to a soaring balance of payments deficit, while their currencies are devalued. Furthermore, by the mid 1970s, there is a constant devaluation-revaluation charade that prevents the coordination of monetary

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policies of various countries.

The first attempt to coordinate monetary policies — the so-called monetary snake — failed in the early 1970s because the problem was dealt with in terms of effects rather than causes. The snake, i.e., the establishment of rigid limits to intra-currency fluctuations, makes no sense if the structural problems preventing weak countries from maintaining fixed exchange levels are not resolved. Early in 1979, the European Monetary System came into being in the form of an up-dated snake subject to the same criticism. Thus, e.g., the Italian lira can fluctuate up to 6 percent. If in the 1970-77 period the lira was devaluated by about 45 percent with respect to other strong currencies, it remains a mystery how such a currency can fluctuate so lightly with the Italian economy in disarray as much as in the past. The same can also be said of the franc. It is no accident that the European Monetary System was developed with delays, conflicts and polemics, and it is assumed that weak currencies will soon be ruined by it. The result is an impasse: growing structural disequilibria snowball into conflicts among the various countries (weak vs. strong ones), thus hindering the development of a common policy. The absence of a common policy at the structural level prevents the elimination of disequilibria within the Common Market. Their persistence, on the other hand, generates further conflicts, thus resulting in a vicious circle.

In this context, the European state remains a myth and elections to the European Parliament are only attempts to veil the fact that, after 20 years, European construction is still bogged down at the level of mere partial and contradictory custom regulations. Nor can European construction develop further inasmuch as it is faced with growing unmanageable centrifugal forces. The revival of the European myth at a time when Europe is little more than a simple geographical entity marks the impasse of European political leadership.

The Political Tasks of the Italian Left

What becomes clear in all of this is that in Italy today, there is no room for reformist policies. The country's economy is unmanageable given Italy's dependence on the imperialist market (through the Common Market) and the multinationals. What is needed is a drastic break with these ties of dependence. This means getting out of a construct in crisis such as the Common Market, within which Italy is condemned to a secondary role in relation to stronger areas (Germany, in particular), as well as socializing the multinational power centers. But since such a solution would upset the Italian capitalist system, the rupture of external relations of dependence must be internally accompanied by a policy of rapid transition to socialism.

This option does not imply the building of socialism within a closed economy — which would be impossible — even though it would require some protectionist measures against rich countries. It is rather a question of defining a new Italian position within the international context. For example, during the 1973 oil crisis, it was suggested by the Communists as well as the

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Christian Democrats that Italy should start dealing directly with oil-producing countries by circumventing the Seven Sisters which required heavy, higher than official, surtaxes on prices. Subsequently, nothing came of it. Yet, in 1975, Iran, a so-called progressive regime in the Mideast, offered directly to the Italian government oil supplies at equitable prices in exchange for non-imperialist cooperation, and it is also clear that similar deals could have materialized with other countries such as Algeria, Venezuela, Libya or Angola. The Italian government, however, did not bother to reply. The explanation for this is fairly clear: trading with these countries on a non-imperialist basis by circumventing the Seven Sisters meant, and still means, colliding with enormous multinationals and the imperialist interests of the U.S. A country such as Italy, dominated by forces integral to the imperialist system, cannot make these choices. Subsequently, the nuclear choice was made (against ferocious popular opposition), i.e., the construction of highly dangerous nuclear power plants in a densely populated country. These power plants absorb immense amounts of capital, which end up in the pockets of multinationals, thus further reinforcing Italy's technological and scientific dependence on the United States, while nuclear energy would only eliminate between 5 and 6 percent of present oil needs. This clearly demonstrates Italy's need for an independent role in international relations. Autonomy does not mean a closed economy, but an independent and oppositional role toward imperialism. This option would open prospects and alternatives now blocked. To do this, however, it is necessary to displace the leadership of Italian capitalism presently integrating the country within the imperialist system.

Yet, given the present structures of the Italian state, is it possible to undertake a process of transition to socialism? For the reformist Left, the Constitution and institutions deriving from it are a bridge toward socialism while, for others, it is a dam against it. The Italian Constitution projects a "planned capitalism" where private initiatives are to be used toward social goals. But this is impossible, since profit cannot be channeled in the pursuit of social goals by direct state planning. Therefore, the problem is not one of implementing the Constitution but of overcoming it in favor of a process of transition to socialism. It goes without saying that this rules out Italy's remaining within an alliance such as NATO. To be economically and politically autonomous and in a position to oppose imperialism, Italy cannot remain in an alliance dominated by Western imperialist powers such as Germany and the United States.

Short- and Long-Term Goals

Obviously major political decisions such as these can be made only by a Left government based on a clear socialist program. This is not presently the case in Italy, where the bulk of the Left (the Italian Communist and Socialist parties) is committed to managing the present system and all its present international ties. In order to realize this program, it is necessary to challenge the historical left and to radically change it.

This cannot be achieved through mere criticism. It is all too easy to point

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out theoretical inconsistencies and intellectual mediocrity. The problem, however, is quite different: it requires social action to precipitate a crisis in the Italian Communist Party's base, in order to force it into a necessarily painful revision of its politics and organizational structure. Up to now, the Communist Party has managed to translate mass struggles into electoral successes by presenting itself as the force able to provide an institutional solution to problems arising from these very mass struggles. After June 3, 1979, however, this image has entered a crisis. The party's policy is faltering while faith in its power has sagged. Thus, faced with the prospect of renewed mass anti-capitalist struggles, the Communist Party, along with the trade unions and the Socialist Party, should be subjected to questioning. The conditions for such a renewal are already present, particularly in factories where the workers' organizational thrust and power have not decreased. As the June 3 electoral results show (with the New Left's growth from 10 to 24 representatives in Parliament) along with the June 1978 referendum results, there is deep discontent in the schools and neighborhoods. It is a matter of outlining objectives for a still functioning movement. But this is not year zero and nothing will have to be invented: since 1969, Italy has been a crucible of struggles based on objectives unthinkable in other countries. The following is only an incomplete list of feasible objectives for the movement.

Inflation: In 1971, Vittorio Foà stressed that simple wage demands were no longer enough, not only because labor struggles were a source of inflation, but because there were vast social strata that lack the workers' organizational power and cannot defend themselves against inflation. The demagoguery of dominant propaganda depicting the working class as corporatively closed in defense of its internal interests can easily find a receptive audience within these strata. This is exactly what happened in Italy in 1919-20, when fascism used these strata to organize a reactionary, mass-based movement. The point is not to reject wage demands, but to accompany them with price control demands whenever monopolies raise the prices of certain goods. This does not entail general strikes against the high cost of living *in general*, but limited and precise struggles against specific price increases and with clear alternatives. In this fashion, the costs of the crisis dumped on the masses by means of price increases would fall back on capital, while the working class would gain the vast support of fairly extensive sectors with vital interests in this type of struggle.[6]

Housing: In Italy, the issue of prices is linked to that of housing. It is claimed that few houses are built and this results in high rents. But this is

6. Obviously, there is nothing original about this proposal. Italy has already experienced this type of struggle with the "self-reduction" in rent, telephone and electricity rates. This brought to life a new form of mass struggle including various institutional initiatives when some democratic judges denounced as fraudulent the figures through which some firms sought to legitimate increases. Wherever this type of struggle might spread, it would take on an anticapitalist turn since blocking the inflation mechanism implies blocking one of capital's vital means of recovery. The spread of this type of struggle guided by concrete and immediate objectives would create a vast anticapitalist front resulting in a crisis within reformist parties and trade unions inevitably involved in this movement, but lacking valid *reformist* alternatives.

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false. Italy is among the highest per capita consumers of cement. In fact, many houses are built, but most of them are luxury units or second homes. Mr. Peggio, a Communist Party representative, has pointed out that in 1978 120,000 luxury or second homes were constructed — about half of all new construction. Because of high prices, there is also a large number of unrented and unsold houses. Here, too, the movement has defined precise objectives for struggle, dealing with the occupation of unrented houses.[7] The housing situation in Italy is clearly explosive and the resumption of a movement to occupy unrented units is not to be ruled out. In this case, the traditional left would have difficulty maintaining the same conservative, pro-landlord attitude it displayed in the events of the Rome house occupations. It is no accident that, after the June 3 lesson, Genova's leftist council has had to requisition some unrented houses.

Energy: In 1977, With Communist support, Parliament approved a nuclear plan projecting the construction of some nuclear power plants which, as already indicated, will not result in any energy independence, but only in large profitable orders for multinationals in this field and in increased technological dependence on the United States. Fortunately, there is growing popular discontent with this notoriously dangerous choice, despite the fact that scores of scientists (some even Communists) parade on television to reassure the public that nuclear power plants are both necessary and safe. As a result, the nuclear plan is slowing down and, a few weeks before the accident at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania, Panella (the Radicals' leader) and other experts proposed a referendum to revoke several rules concerning the location of nuclear power plants, which in practice would have made their construction impossible.[8] For some time now, some of those left of the Communist Party (but from within the Party as well) have stressed that Italy has alternative energy sources ranging from solar to hydroelectric power, which are cheaper and can be developed at a much lower cost than nuclear power.

Democratic liberties: The extreme left has been warning about the fascistization of the state, not just in Italy but in Europe as a whole, in the wake of the exceptionally repressive laws recently passed in Italy and, above all, in Germany. This analysis is mistaken. Fascism in Italy and Germany was a mass movement capable of generating a consensus on the basis of its promise of socio-economic development. Today, the Italian bourgeoisie and its bourgeois state cannot make this promise and on many levels, bourgeois

7. Recently, a Roman judge, a member of the democratic wing of the judiciary, ordered the requisition of several hundred unrented apartments. What followed was a major scandal among the law-abiding and traditional left: by Jove, this violated the property principle! A few weeks later, the conservative Supreme Court overruled the judge on the ground that the law allowing requisitions pertained to goods and products, not to houses — which, presumably, are then neither goods nor products!

8. Following Harrisburg, discontent and diffidence grew even further. If this popular referendum were held this year or in 1981, it is very likely that the anti-nuclear camp would score a big victory. This would force the traditional left to revise drastically its line and lead to a bitter confrontation with capital and the Christian Democrats — resulting in the burial once and for all of the "Compromesso Storico" and "national Unity" platforms.

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values have lost support. The violence of the fascist state derived from strength, while the violence of the Christian Democratic state is that of a weak and discredited state in crisis. Yet, although chaotic and counter-productive, repression does exist and answers the need for containing the movement when institutions are no longer able to neutralize or defeat it politically. This tendency must be opposed. Thus, the Radicals' initiative for referenda to invalidate repressive measures directed against free thought and trade unionism is very important. It should be remembered that even today about a fifth of the fascist penal code is still standing in Italy. It would also force the traditional left to choose either to ally itself with the Christian Democrats in defense of fascist laws or to oppose them. As for the Christian Democrats, it cannot be denied that they have support among workers. Thus, although Catholic workers have participated in last decade's struggles, they have mostly struggled against employers, and not against capital. In this respect, they have been able to continue to vote for the Christian Democrats. Now, then, the Christian Democrats would have to tell their electorate that some types of struggle constitute offenses punishable by jail sentences — which would place them in an unpleasant position.

Institutions: Following June 3, 1979, the growth of the New Left represents a potentially disruptive factor to parliamentary balance. At present, Parliament has lost power to the executive, which legislates largely by decree. The constitution provides for law by decree as a means of governmental recourse in cases of emergency. In that case, a provision is drawn which has immediate force of law, but must be ratified by Parliament within 60 days. From an extraordinary measure, the decree has grown into a normal meaus. Economic instability has meant that the government is often confronted with urgent economic situations calling for immediate provisions, which slow parliamentary procedures cannot generate. Thus, the decree is introduced and within 60 days, faced with a *fait accompli*, Parliament usually ratifies the decree with only minor revisions. The game goes on as long as there is no parliamentary opposition or just a token one. When the opposition is real, however, things change.[9] Twenty or more deputies can usually obstruct many critical government decrees concerning economic policy by forcing the traditional left to openly take sides.

Obviously, it is impossible to contain decrees forever through obstructionism. Yet, the threat of obstructionism can be useful in obtaining governmental concessions in favor of popular interests.

New Left, Reformism and Terrorism

No analysis of the Italian situation can be complete without discussing relations between the traditional left, the New Left and terrorism. Who is the real enemy? Is it terrorism as argued by the Communist Party, or is it the

9. Thus, in 1978, obstructionism by three New Left deputies (Gorlo, Mellini and Pinto) was enough to hinder 60-day ratification of the Pedini decree introduced by the government in a blatant counter-reformist university policy that aimed at restoring order in Italian higher education by placing a gravestone on the remains of the 1968 gains.

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Communist Party as the Red Brigades claim? Neither: the real enemy is Christian Democracy, which stands for capital and its political mediation. Despite everything, the Communist Party is not a bourgeois party, nor is the Socialist Party, since the traditional left expresses popular and workers' demands for reform and renewal that capital cannot satisfy. It is precisely for this reason that in 1979 the bankrupt policy on national unity collapsed: in order to obtain trade union support for the Christian Democrats, real reformist proposals were needed which, although never threatening the capitalist system as such, actually addressed some popular demands for renewal. Since this was unacceptable to capital, the policy of national unity was scrapped. Hence, it is necessary to work toward uniting reformist parties and the forces they represent in a new policy to change the system. This is not an easy task since, for thirty years, leading groups and left party bureaucratic machines have admittedly sought to manage rather than radically change the system. Certain practices, ideas and organizational structures developed over time have become fossilized and will take time to change. Yet, there are still ways to explode the contradictions of the reformist left and force it to rethink its role. The development of the Italian left is unthinkable without the participation of the traditional left. This means that the New Left will have to take on a critical stance and concentrate on practical initiatives in order to force the traditional left to make a choice.

As for terrorism, it has always been an enemy of the labor movement. In Italy, however, it is a product of the capitalist crisis that can be defeated only by fighting against the main enemy — capital.[10] The New Left has often stressed that terrorism's basis for recruitment lies among those youths who have been marginalized by the capitalist crisis. As late as 12 or 15 years ago, by comparison to workers, students were part of the privileged middle class. The situation has changed, however, since the shrinking of the job market has stripped academic degress of any value as means for upward social mobility.

University cities like Padua and Bologna teem with youths without prospects who come from all over Italy with insoluble problems that place them in conflict with the existing social environment.[11] What is to be done? Ask for repressive laws that turn out to be totally ineffective as the 1975 Reale

10. Analogies between "red terror" and fascism are to be rejected. Obviously, fascism also used violence and, like terrorism, its goal was to exclude the masses from politics. But fascism was a mass movement with a theory of capitalist renewal which "red" terror lacks, along with a mass following. On the other hand, the use of violence is not extraneous to the history of the workers' movement: it stigmatized Stalinist parties (with quite a large number of workers' executioners) as well as the German Social-Democratic accomplices in Rosa Luxemburg's assassination. Yet, neither Social-Democracy nor Stalinism was a fascist movement.

11. This is not a case of proletarianization since proletariats are productive workers. Here we have a phenomenon of mass unemployment, especially in the sense that the unstable jobs available to them are unproductive and temporary. Marginal youths thus are closer to sub-proletarians than to proletarians since they lack a stable location in the productive structures which, in the case of the working class, determines its tenacity, organizational ability and condition it for prolonged contractual struggles. Desperate and without prospects, young people go on violent sprees followed by unforeseeable repercussions. Desperation at a young age becomes fertile soil for a variety of disastrous outcomes of which terrorism is only one. Others include drugs, common delinquency, self-withdrawal or even suicide — the extreme act.

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act or aim at a political solution of the problem? If mayors of communist cities merely call the police to clear City Hall of occupying unemployed protesters, youths and marginal workers, one can only hope that they do not become fellow travelers of the terrorists. Only by means of a radically anti-capitalist politics will the left be able to channel society's disruptive impulses in a positive direction.

The Communist Party's Electoral Defeat of June 3, 1979

For the first time since 1948, the June 3, 1979, elections signaled a dead stop for the Italian Communist Party. Yet, the left as a whole lost only very slightly, going from 46.7 percent to 45.9 percent of the vote. Thus, the Communist defeat (it lost 4 percent) does not necessarily mean a defeat for the entire left. The New Left grew from 2.6 percent in 1976 to 5.6 percent. While in 1976 there was one New Left voter for every 14 or so Communist voters, the proportion now is about 1 to 5.5.

In order to understand this electoral shift, it is necessary to examine the strategic assumptions of Communist politics in the 1976-79 period. From the economic viewpoint, the Communist Party claimed that, given the seriousness of the crisis, no single class could resolve it. Therefore, a policy of democratic union of all classes was needed. This assumption has turned out to be wrong. For capitalists, the end of the crisis means to re-establish a suitable rate of profit, while for workers, it means at the least an increase in employment. In order to raise profits, however, employment must drop. This is not surprising: the present structural tendency of world capitalism is toward increases in unemployment and there is no solution other than to break with the whole system. Since Italy is a peripheral and dependent country, things are more serious than elsewhere. Thus, Italian Communists have found themselves stranded: everyday they spoke of employment and they also had to stress that unemployment was increasing. Ultimately, the only thing they could point to as the result of successful economic policies was the reduction in the rate of price increases ("only" 12.5 percent in 1978) and the new equilibrium in the balance of payments. The Communist Party's leadership does not seem to realize that these are absurd, even provocative, positions completely divorced from the life of the masses. In a country where in the mid 1970s, 46 percent of monthly family income was under $400, calling a 12.5 percent rate of inflation a success cut the ground under the party's own feet for, if this is success, the disease must be incurable. At any rate, in 1978, Italy's rate of inflation remained very high in comparison to other rich European countries where no Communists supporting their government. As for the balance of payments equilibrium, it was obtained by means of austerity measures such as wage controls and devaluation.

From the political viewpoint, the Communist Party has accepted for years the thesis that the Christian Democratic Party is a popular one, without a thorough analysis of the historical bloc on which this party rests. The only consideration was that a party with 37-38 percent of the votes must have popular roots. But, with this logic, the Gaullists, Giscardians, Suarez

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centrists, Mrs. Thatcher's conservatives and even the Nazis, who won 37 percent of the November 1932 free elections, would also have to be regarded as popularly based. In other words, all this neglects the fact that there can be reactionary or conservative mass parties which, although commanding a large consensus, are still reactionary as exemplified by their policies in relentless defense of profit and private property. That Christian Democracy was in Italy the party of capital, which managed its reconstruction and later the "miracle" is too well-known for the Communists to deny. What was needed was an analysis of the nature of Christian Democracy in order to unveil and explode its contradictions. Instead, the Communist Party has sought top-level alliances with the entire Christian Democratic Party in places like Naples and even Sicily, where Christian Democrats have been notoriously linked with the Mafia. As a result, the Communist Party lost not only intellectuals of the caliber of Sciascia, but also 1.5 million voters — particularly Southerners and young constituents.[12]

Italy today finds itself at a historical turning point. The crisis has exploded all reformist dreams and requires drastic anti-capitalist solutions. Unless directed toward radically changing the system, reformist struggles, once important and instrumental to the Communist Party's growth, no longer make sense. In the last 35 years, the Communist Party has never dealt with alternatives to capital. All it has done is run well the Bologna communal administration, which is no longer enough. For at least 35 years, a number of things have grown distant from its views, practices, organization and even its language, and it cannot reinvent new strategies on short notice. This explains the hysterical reactions toward anyone reminding the party of the crisis and worthlessness of its party line, and the hope that, despite all, everything would be fine if only they were to become the opposition once again. Being in the opposition, however, entails action, i.e., challenging the capitalist economic and political system. Today, if the Communist Party goes too far in the opposition, it runs the risk of fueling an uncontrollable chain of reactions while, if it stays put, it remains open to New Left attacks and a rising social and trade-unionist opposition.

The only way out for the Communist Party is to reconsider its role, to open a debate concerning its identity as a reformist party at a time when capital cannot be reformed but instead must be radically challenged. Replacing short-sighted and comfortably established bureaucrats can only be a timid beginning. The real way out must be the difficult one, involving strategic, political and ideological reconsiderations. The Communist Party must either reconsider everything or face a future of constantly shrinking prospects.

12. There had been plenty of danger signs. In 1977, local elections at Castellamare di Stabia, a large southern center and a one-time communist stronghold, proved disastrous. Also in 1977, the student movement broke out and Lama was expelled from Rome University. In 1978, there were other equally catastrophic partial elections and referenda that split the Left electorates. Since it cannot respond to specific criticisms, the Communist Party opts for a sectarian and defensive attitude which, lacking in substance, usually relies on insults: thus, Marco Pannella, a clearly controversial figure, yet a fervent supporter of anti-nuclear positions and of civil liberties, is called a clown, a non-entity, a fascist — even though he is fighting for the repeal of fascist laws!

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MARX, BAKUNIN AND THE PROBLEM OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

by John Clark

In their debates of the 1860s and 1870s, Marx and Bakunin presented two distinctive interpretations of social change, the nature of domination, and the conditions for human liberation. Although their opposition had its basis in fundamental theoretical differences that are of enduring significance, the dispute has long been of interest primarily to historians, who have noted its considerable historical importance. For first it contributed to the dissolution of the First International, and later it left its mark on two increasingly polarized segments of the international labor movement. Whereas both parliamentary socialism and revolutionary communism ascribed to Marx's views, the anarchosyndicalist movement, a major force in Southern Europe and parts of Latin America, carried on Bakunin's tradition. Yet, by the end of the 1930s, anarchosyndicalism was obviously moribund. The anarchosyndicalist unions had all lost their mass bases, either from defections to communism or because of repression by authoritarian regimes. To the extent that practical success is the criterion by which to judge the significance of theory, history had decided for Marx and against Bakunin. Their debate could thus be catalogued as a minor chapter in the history of Marxism's triumph over all the other movements that presented alternative visions of revolutionary theory and practice. The *content* of the debate could be ignored. Yet, their dispute is still of great importance, and, contrary to widespread belief, Bakunin is indeed a serious political thinker whose works deserve careful consideration today. Especially now, as issues such as self-management and individual freedom create stirrings within officially Marxist parties, as disillusionment with the evolution of state socialism continues to grow, and as the same arguments once made by Bakunin reappear, the relevance of the earlier debates becomes increasingly clear.[1]

Bakunin's view of reality, developed in part through the influence of Marx, is thoroughly materialist. Although he is often charged with adhering to a kind of "voluntarism," he attributes absolutely no significance to "free will," which he sees as a religious or metaphysical illusion. Both theorists accept the natural, material world as the sufficient basis for explanation of reality, and posit no transcendental realm. In works like *The Knouto-Germanic Empire and the Social Revolution*, Bakunin argues, as Marx does, for a resolutely

1. Much of the best analysis along lines suggested by Bakunin is now being done by theorists who are in the Marxist tradition or who have evolved out of that tradition. Bookchin and Guerin are perhaps the best examples among those who are now most explicitly associated with anarchist theory. However, echoes of Bakunin's critique of Marx are evident in the work of Wellmer, Castoriadis, and Lefort, too. See also Guillen's work, which makes a fascinating attempt at a synthesis of Marx and Bakunin, but which unfortunately preserves some of the most obsolete features of both their outlooks.

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critical standpoint toward historical development. This development, he says, must be judged in terms of the goal immanent in the historical struggles of humanity — the creation of a human community free of domination, or, as he phrases it in the work mentioned, "the complete conquest and establishment of personal freedom — material and moral — for every individual, through the absolutely unrestricted and spontaneous organization of economic solidarity."[2] This criterion for judgment, however, leads Bakunin to question many aspects of Marx's analysis, including the latter's assessment of the liberatory implications of the development of capitalist production, and to propose what is in some ways a more comprehensive version of historical materialism — one which is more open to culture and subjectivity.

One area on which Bakunin focuses is Marx's view that economics is the basis for all historical development.[3] According to Bakunin, if humanity is to achieve liberation, this cannot come from activity imposed on people by economic conditions of exploitation and misery, but rather it must come from an active process of struggle for liberation, and from the knowledge attained in this struggle. "How can the working masses acquire any knowledge of their rights? Only through their great historical experience, through this great tradition, unfolded over the centuries and transmitted from generation to generation, continually augmented and enriched by new sufferings and new injustices, finally permeating and enlightening the great proletarian masses."[4] This historical knowledge must also affect the development of consciously libertarian forms of organization and interpersonal relations. Without such consciousness and the liberatory culture in which it is embodied, the masses cannot become creatively active in history, and they become the victims of renewed domination.

But does Marx, the economic determinist, who is the object of Bakunin's attack, really exist? There is reason to think so, especially if we look at the *locus classicus* for determining the nature of Marx's historical materialism — i.e., the "Preface" to the *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy.* In Marx's later works, such as the *Grundrisse* and *Capital,* the old position continues to occupy a central place in his thought, and the comments in the *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* are far from an isolated aberration. Although in the *Grundrisse* we find a brilliant analysis of the interconnection between the precapitalist development of the productive forces, the formation of monetary wealth, and the availability of free labor, the productive forces are again discovered to be the determining factor in the rise of the new mode of production.[5] The same is true in *Capital.*

But we must return to the *Grundrisse* for the most striking examples of Marx's productivist view of society. These examples can be taken not only from Marx's discussion of humanity under capitalist production, but also in

2. Sam Dolgoff, ed., *Bakunin on Anarchy* (New York, 1971), pp. 310-311.
3. *Ibid.,* p. 310.
4. *Ibid.,* pp. 209-210.
5. Robert Tucker, ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader* (New York, 1972), pp. 506-509.

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his treatment of pre- and post-capitalist society. In discussing primitive society, Marx deals with myth, one of the most complex and richly developed symbolic forms. He sees myth as a primitive attempt at dominating nature, an imaginary domination that arises from humanity's temporary inability to achieve actual domination through production. "All mythology overcomes and dominates and shapes the forces of nature in the imagination and by the imagination; it therefore vanishes with the advent of real mastery."[6] Myth is thus absorbed into the sphere of instrumental activity and associated with the impulse for utilization of nature as a mere means. Mythological consciousness thus becomes technique — albeit an idealist, ineffectual technique to be transcended by the more effective and therefore higher technique of material transformation.

Perhaps the most incisive recent critique of Marx on this point is presented by Sahlins, who confronts Marxian theory with the centrality within human existence of a cultural reason that cannot be absorbed into pragmatic or instrumental rationality, no matter how firmly the latter may be grounded in a social conception of human development. According to this perspective, "the species to which Marx's 'species-being' belongs is *Homo Economicus*" and Marx's program for human liberation exhibits a "spiritualized 'market mentality,' combining human needs (of self-realization), natural scarcities (of objective means), and man's progressive liberation from this dismal condition by purposive action."[7] This vision of the project of emancipation through production is founded in large part in Marx's epistemology, in which meaning is assimilated into the pragmatic activity of naming, and cultural creation is reduced to a reflection of material practice. But this reduction ignores the centrality of the symbolic process. The Marxian position ignores the fact that all values, including use values, can only be ordered by (and in fact are in large part *constituted* by) a system of meanings that cannot be reduced to an idealized expression of biological needs, or even of higher needs generated by advances in the process of material transformation. Marx's productivist view of human activity ignores this irreducibility of cultural reason to practical logic, and as a result he is unable to fully uncover the relativity of the assumptions of bourgeois society and of civilization itself concerning practice, instrumental action, and technique. What is more, this productivist view, by restricting Marx's critique, in turn restricts his view of the parameters within which the project of human emancipation is to take place.

This entire aspect of Marx's thought — his tendency toward economic determinism and a productivist view of human nature — forms the background for the dispute between Bakunin and Marx over the historical significance of capitalist production. It is Bakunin's claim that Marx uncritically accepts the necessity of many elements of bourgeois society and capitalist production as a stage toward the liberation of humanity. The implication is that Marx and a large segment of the workers' movement were

6. Karl Marx, *Grundrisse* (New York, 1973), p. 110.
7. Marshall Sahlins, *Culture and Practical Reason* (Chicago), p. 161.

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still unable to take a critical approach to many of the presuppositions of the age, and that a more thoroughgoing analysis of the domination of political discourse by the categories of bourgeois ideology, and a far more radical break with this ideology, were necessary. As Bakunin explains, "we recognize, indeed, the necessary and inevitable character of all events that occur but we no longer bow before them indifferently, and above all we are careful about praising them when, by their nature, they show themselves in flagrant contradiction to the supreme end of history,"[8] which he sees as the development of non-dominating community. The specific subject of dispute is the historical significance of bourgeois society. According to Bakunin, Marx sees the development of capitalism as the advance toward social revolution and the emergence of a free society. The latter holds that (as Bakunin formulates it), if "countries are more backward from the viewpoint of capitalist production, they are necessarily equally backward from that of social revolution."[9]

This interpretation of historical progress is a very strong current in Marx's thought, and is rooted in his tendency to see the development of human society through various successive stages analogous to the stages in the maturation of a human being. Ancient society and all primitive societies represent the childhood of the human race. Like most 19th-century bourgeois, Marx had a condescending, paternalistic view of children (not to mention women). Myth, as already noted, is seen as a primitive attempt to dominate nature, an infantile fantasy of the race that disappears when "real mastery" — the reality principle — intervenes. Similarly, classical art is a product of the childhood of humanity, and thus "charming," like the naive products of childhood.[10] When Marx deals with non-Western societies, he sees them as equally childish, but somehow less charming. The bourgeoisie, in making "the country dependent on the towns,...the barbarian and semi-barbarian countries dependent on the civilized ones, nations of peasants on nations of bourgeois, the East on the West," performs the service of rescuing increasing numbers of people "from the idiocy of rural life."[11]

In Bakunin's view, dimensions other than technical and economic development must be given more consideration than Marx allows, if any society's potential for liberation is to be accurately assessed. Accordingly, he points out the significance of culture, which has never convincingly been reduced to a mere mediation between ultimate economic causes and other social realities. He argues for the importance of a sense of community and of the existence of what he calls "the instinct of rebellion."[12] He sees in many more traditional societies a greater capacity for social revolution than the

8. Dolgoff, *op.cit.*, p. 310.

9. Arthur Lehning, ed., *Michael Bakunin: Selected Writings* (New York, 1971), p. 244.

10. *Grundrisse, op.cit.*, p. 111.

11. Tucker, *op.cit.*, p. 339.

12. Lehning, *op.cit.*, p. 256. One of Bakunin's serious errors is his overemphasis on rebellious *instincts*, which at times obscures his analysis of the importance of conscious, reflective social transformation.

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more "advanced" or "civilized" societies that Marx saw as progressive. For example, Bakunin perceived certain libertarian and communal feelings of Latin cultures to be an advantage over the authoritarian and hierarchical outlook of the Germans, whom Marx often saw as likely harbingers of the coming revolution. Bakunin cautions us to beware of those who wish to "civilize" the less economically developed societies and groups within society.[13] He believes this desire to be reactionary for two reasons: both because it will require oppressive means in order to reach its goal; and, even more important, because it will result in the destruction of cultural conditions with libertarian potential in order to replace them with conditions that open even greater opportunities for domination.[14]

But what, more precisely, is Marx's conception of the "civilizing" nature of bourgeois production? It is not difficult to find in his works a great deal of evidence of his confidence in the revolutionary achievements of capitalism. His remarks on imperialism in India are an indication. The progressive function of capital is, above all, to develop the productive forces and to create conditions that will prepare the way for the social revolution which will finally make possible their further development.

Anarchist social theory has always questioned the validity of the view that large-scale, centralized, highly mechanized industry can be the means toward a humane society. Classical anarchism, from Proudhon to Kropotkin, proposed instead humanly-scaled, decentralized, labor-intensive production,

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13. Dolgoff, *op.cit.*, p. 203.

14. Although Bakunin himself was unable to pose the question, his comments on culture point toward the significance of the opposition on the one hand between the primitive and the civilized and, on the other, between culture and the state. Consideration of the relation between these two oppositions points to the need for a movement from the critique of the state to a critique of civilization itself. Recent work by Pierre Clastres suggested what some of the implications of such a critique might be. According to Clastres, the lesson of primitive society is that "it is the political break that is decisive, and not the economic transformation." *Society against the State* (New York, 1977), p. 171. Primitive society, he says, saw "the great affinity of power and nature, as the twofold limitation of the domain of culture" (p. 35). Primitive society is a society of abundance, as Sahlins has convincingly shown in *Stone-Age Economics* (Chicago, 1972). Following this analysis, Clastres holds that it is "an essentially egalitarian society" in which "men control their activity, control the circulation of products of that activity" (p. 167). History presents us with only two qualitatively different forms of society — primitive society with its cultural scheme of organization and statist or politically organized society. Clastres' empirical study of American Indian societies leads him to the conclusion that although diverse systems of production can exist and even succeed one another without corresponding variations in other cultural institutions, the transition to statist forms inevitably produces revolutionary changes in the entire social structure, changes that result in "hierarchical authority, the power relation, the subjugation of men" (p. 171). He suggests that should we wish to preserve the Marxist concepts of infrastructure and superstructure, it might be necessary to label politics the infrastructure and economics the superstructure. Yet, Clastres himself does not fall into this trap and he does not accept the alternative of a simplistic demographic determinism. While there is abundant evidence of the importance of population growth as a key factor in the rise of the state (pp. 180-181, and cf. also Robert Carneiro, "A Theory of the Origin of the State" in *Science*, No. 168, pp. 733-738), attention must also be devoted to the struggle of the culture to reverse the tendencies that lead to the emergence of political society (pp. 182-186).

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which was seen as compatible with social and political institutions based on individual freedom, democracy, and self-management.[15] One of the strongest arguments put forth for such technology is that it makes possible the synthesis of manual and mental labor, and thus helps prevent the emergence of technocratic and bureaucratic elites which appropriate the responsibility for decision-making and social creation. While these anarchist principles only came to fruition in the classical period in the works of Kropotkin,[16] they are anticipated in Bakunin's emphasis on small scale productive and communal groups as fundamental, his abhorrence for centralized plans and the elites that administer them, and his advocacy of "integral education," which would seek immediately to develop in each individual the ability to comprehend social processes and to participate knowledgeably in decision-making.[17]

In the context of these principles, capitalist production is seen by Bakunin as a force which, far from creating the conditions for a liberatory society, creates a degree of powerlessness and societal incomprehensibility which places increasingly more formidable barriers in the way of social emancipation. It is true, as Marx points out, that human needs develop and become more sophisticated, more civilized, as production increases. Production itself creates needs for that which is produced (and, as is also mentioned, for consumption, for the materials of production, for distribution, etc.), so that for Marx the development of production means development (in the sense of enrichment) of needs. Yet several problems arise. One is the possibility that as the expanded system of production produces ever greater needs for objects (whether these objects be capitalist commodities or not), such needs may come to occupy the central place in our value system, displacing needs that Bakunin identified as ultimate (freedom and community). Bakunin has little to say about this possibility, although the distinction is implicit in his thought. Recent thinkers very much in the tradition of Bakunin have said a great deal about it, as we come to see that a "rich individuality" based on high levels of consumption can be quite compatible with social impoverishment. Both critical theory and situationism have developed this line of analysis. But another related possibility is of more immediate concern, since it was elaborated by Bakunin in some detail. This is the possibility that the system of technology which is proposed as a means toward liberation may create new potentialities for class domination.

Much of Bakunin's critique of Marx is concerned with the problem of ends and means. It has sometimes been proposed (by Bakunin himself, for example) that Marxists and anarchists agree about the ends that they strive

15. But note that *anarchism as a mass movement* has also in many cases tended to succumb to the ideology of industrialism, albeit to a lesser degree than most other forces on the left. This tendency has been most marked in anarcho-syndicalist movements, which have had enduring productivist and economistic inclinations, in spite of the efforts of their more critical adherents. Contemporary anarchism, while appealing less to the toiling masses, is more ecologically conscious, more communalist, and more critical and imaginative on the subject of technology.

15. See *Fields, Factories and Workshops Today*, edited by Colin Ward (London, 1974).

17. See G.P. Maximoff, ed., *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin* (New York, 1953), pp. 411-412.

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for, but that the means that they propose are antithetical. This is only partly true. While their means certainly differ markedly, it would be an oversimplification to identify their final goals. While both foresee the disappearance of the state, the achievement of social management of the economy, the end of class rule, and the attainment of human equality, to mention a few common goals, there are still significant differences in ends. Marxist thought has inherited a vision that looks to high development of technology and a corresponding degree of centralization of social institutions that will continue even after the coming of the social revolution. It also presents a model of human nature that conceives of humans as producers, and sees productive activity as the primary achievement of the future communist human being. Finally, there is a view of the future in which the individual and society are reconciled, and in which individual activity becomes thoroughly social. However, this view devotes little attention to those institutions which are the locus for close personal interaction, an area given great importance by anarchists. The social forms that mediate between humanity and the person seem to be historically dispensable.

The anarchist vision, on the other hand, sees the human scale as essential, both in the techniques which are used for production, and for the institutions that arise from the new modes of association. Human nature is conceived of less on the model of artisanship or productivity (although this is still an important theme). There is a greater emphasis on cultural interaction, and on the person's enjoyment of free social activity. As a result, anarchists have seen the goal as a society in which numerous small-scale, personalistic groups will form the basis for a larger social unity. As Martin Buber put it, the good society is conceived of as a community of communes.[18] In addition, the anarchist ideal has a strong hedonistic element that has made Germanic socialism always seem to anarchists to be ascetic and Puritanical. To Bakunin, "the socialist. . . takes his stand on his positive right to life and all its pleasures, both intellectual, moral and physical. He loves life, and intends to enjoy it to the full."[19] Such a person is distinguished by "*his frank and human selfishness*, living candidly and unsententiously for himself, and knowing that by doing so *in accordance with justice* he serves the whole of society."[20] This

18. See *Paths in Utopia* (New York, 1958). Anarchist theory has been greatly enriched by the development of the communal anarchist tradition. To appreciate this development as reflected in anarchist theory, one should begin by tracing its elaboration in the works of Peter Kropotkin, Errico Malatesta, Gustav Landauer, Martin Buber, and Murray Bookchin.

19. Lehning, *op.cit.*, p. 101. Bakunin is, of course, using the term "socialist" to mean "libertarian socialist." It should also be noted that Bakunin did not entirely escape the ascetic mentality of bourgeois industrial society, and at times he praises revolutionary sacrifice as if it were a virtue in itself. This asceticism has continued to be an undercurrent in the anarchist movement, especially in so far as it has aspired to be part of a "workers" movement. Note, for example, those anarchosyndicalists of the CNT who hailed it proudly as "the union of sacrifice."

20. *Ibid.*, p. 102. Bakunin's view thus aims at a synthesis of the general and particular interests. It has nothing in common with the self-contradictory egoist "anarchism" of Stirner. For a detailed critique of Stirner and egoist "anarchism," see my book *Max Stirner's Egoism* (London, 1976).

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view has been embodied in the anarchist ideal of community as the collective realization of individual desire.[21] Thus, it appears that, in spite of the often repeated cliches about the two ideals being one, there are in fact significant differences in emphasis that have a strong bearing on the two conceptions of the means toward the ideal.

This having been said, it is possible to comprehend better the more striking differences between the two views of the relation between means and ends. Anarchism takes as one of its cardinal principles the proposition that only libertarian means can be used (not merely "should be used") to successfully create a libertarian social order. This is the implication of Bakunin's statement (which has been seen as incomprehensible nonsense by some of his opponents) that "liberty can only be created by liberty."[22] According to this concept, the revolutionary movement must itself be a microcosm of the new society, which is thus being "created within the shell of the old." Humanity cannot be prepared for its existence as a non-dominating community if it is regimented by a revolutionary elite that is the repository of the secret of the nature of historical movement, or if the structures of the revolutionary organizations are modelled after the hierarchical structures of bourgeois society. The revolutionary structures must instead be those which are the most conducive to the development of self-consciousness, responsibility, and free activity. Humanity develops not through a new seizure of power, but rather through the creation of new forms of human interaction.

Bakunin, for all his suggestiveness, left much of the task of analyzing the various forms of domination to future anarchists and other anti-authoritarians. However, on the matter of the nature of the state and bureaucratic domination, his thought is especially fertile. One of the most extensively developed themes in his work is the idea that the state cannot be used as a means toward liberation, and that it is inevitably a tool of domination, no matter who controls it, and in whose name they act. According to this argument, the state is the imposition of the will of some on others, and therefore it hinders the development of an organic unity that comes from within each but which eventuates in the strongest bonds uniting all. It is because of the importance placed on this principle that anarchists oppose to coercive, statist organizations the idea of federation, or voluntary association. The anarchist goal is the replacement, to the greatest degree practically possible, of all governmental institutions by voluntary ones. The vast majority

21. As Axelos notes, Marx moves toward but does not develop the idea that human activity must enter into the dimension of play, a conclusion that would have been difficult to reconcile with his instrumentalist model of human action. Yet, this is exactly the direction in which anarchist thought has been tending, although it is a long path from Bakunin's confused amalgam of creative joy and revolutionary renunciation to Bookchin's call for the transformation of "labor into play and need into desire." *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* (Berkeley, 1971), p. 41. For another contemporary anarchist discussion, see Paul Goodman's analysis of artistic activity and play as related to the concept of organismic self-regulation in F. Perls, R. Hefferline and P. Goodman, *Gestalt Therapy* (New York, 1951), Vol. II.

22. Lehning, *op.cit.*, p. 270.

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of anarchists have recognized that this will be a gradual process, and that for the present some degree of political organization is necessary. As a result they (including Bakunin) have proposed that political control be severely limited, and that to the degree that it is still necessary it be situated in small-scale communal and productive groups, which will federate for their larger purposes. But the state, with its centralization of authority and vast concentration of power, must be eliminated immediately.

Bakunin's rejection of the state as a means toward liberation encompasses a rejection of electoral politics as a revolutionary strategy. He and the Alliance for Social Democracy "rejected all collaboration with bourgeois politics, in however radical and socialist a disguise."[23] If the revolutionary movement constitutes the majority of the population consciously engaged in the task of creating a new libertarian society, then direct action is the only effective approach to change. The people should move to replace centralized and authoritarian institutions by decentralized, federalist, participatory, libertarian ones. Electoral politics would not only be ineffective, but even counterrevolutionary, reinforcing the legitimacy of forms of domination that are ripe for destruction. If the revolutionary movement is, however, a minority, no more should it rely on electoral politics with hopes of improving its position. Such a strategy will only divert the energies of the movement from more effective struggles, and will, moreover, begin the creation of a new stratum of leaders of the working class.

Bakunin proposes that the strategies of both electoral and extra-parliamentary party politics be rejected, and that instead a non-authoritarian, decentralist revolutionary movement, which prefigures the new libertarian society, be formed. This movement "will create its revolutionary organization from the bottom up and from the circumference inwards, in accordance with the principle of liberty, and not from the top down and the center outward, as is the way of all authority."[24] The nature of such a movement can be inferred from his discussion of certain practical problems in the International. He deplores the growth of bureaucratic tendencies and the abdication of responsibility by some groups of workers. He argues that to combat this trend no high salaries should be given to officials of labor organizations, but rather they should remain workers.[25] Decisions should be made by the members of the sections, and authority should not be given up to members of committees elected to represent the workers.[26] Responsibility must in a meaningful sense lie with the groups of workers themselves. There must be active workers' assemblies, in which the participants have a good

23. Dolgoff, *op.cit.*, p. 289.

24. Lehning, *op.cit.*, p. 170. Bakunin here uses the word "authority" to signify "externally imposed authority." He often uses the word loosely for rhetorical purposes, but in his more thoughtful discussions distinguishes more carefully between valid and invalid authority.

25. Dolgoff, *op.cit.*, p. 245.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 246. This point is especially important in relation to later discussion of workers' councils. Bakunin is pointing out difficulties that can arise even within this system of economic organization. However, he would certainly see the council movement as a major advance in socialist development.

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grasp of the problems they face, and in which they shape the strategies that will be used. Finally, he cautions the workers against the dangers of the rise of leaders within their own ranks, and of the tendency to subordinate the judgment of all to the decision-making of the few. Principles such as these have helped give direction to the anarchosyndicalist movement, which developed far beyond the suggestions made by Bakunin, especially by applying his federalist principles in building mass-based industrial unions. The strengths and limitations of these principles can best be judged by the successes and failures of the Spanish anarchosyndicalist movement — the anarchist labor movement that has had the widest popular support and which was able to embody many of Bakunin's proposals in its prerevolutionary organizing, in the constructive achievements of the collectives during the revolution, and in its recent reorganization.[27]

Another central issue in the debate between Bakunin and Marx concerns the role of classes in social change. Bakunin has often been depicted as the defender of the revolutionary role of the lumpenproletariat, a class whose counterrevolutionary tendencies are strongly emphasized by Marx. Bakunin presumably saw the revolution being careated by rampaging hordes of criminals and vagabonds, whose ranks would no doubt be swelled by the spread of inflammatory anarchist propaganda. In fact, Bakunin saw revolutionary potential in several classes, including the lumpenproletariat; however, the classes that he saw as the primary revolutionary forces were the industrial workers and the peasants. His disagreement with Marx concerning

27. See, for example, Gaston Leval, *Collectives in the Spanish Revolution* (London, 1975). It has been argued that the greatest failing of the CNT, the Spanish anarcho-syndicalist labor movement (which should be distinguished from the collectives), was its departure during the Civil War from some of the principles set forth by Bakunin (among others) and adopted early in the movement's history. Thus, it failed to combat bureaucratic and elitist tendencies adequately and to keep power firmly rooted in the direct democratic assemblies of the workers. As a result, it allowed "influential militants" to enter into a coalition government "temporarily," so that the war could be won. See Vernon Richards, *Lessons of the Spanish Revolution* (London, 1972), for a devastating critique of this "anarchist" stragegy from an anarchist perspective. While the CNT's abandonment of its anti-statism was a rejection of Bakunin's stated principles, the elitism that was largely responsible for its occurrence can in part be traced back to elements of Bakunin's own thought and practice, and that of his Spanish followers. It is important to recognize that this elitism, which has appeared at various times in the anarcho-syndicalist movement's history, is not a departure from *all* of Bakunin's principles, for there is a strong vanguardist tendency in his thinking. In "The Program and Purpose of the Revolutionary Organization of International Brothers," he proposes a secret association of revolutionaries who are to help guide the larger movement. While frequently rejecting the concept of "dictatorship" he contradicts himself by describing the organization as an "invisible dictatorship," which will become a kind of "general staff" of the revolutionary movement. Cf. Lehning, *op.cit.*, p. 180. Bakunin began to see the inconsistency between his general position and such proposals, and qualifies such statements by a stipulation that such groups must only "help people toward self-determination...without the least interference by any sort of domination, even if it be temporary or transitional." *Ibid.*, p. 191. Unfortunately, it is impossible to deal adequately here with the implications of this problem. Suffice it to say that Bakunin does not sufficiently investigate the problem of distinguishing between legitimate and illegitimate authority in a libertarian, decentralist political movement (as did *none* of the classical anarchist theorists), and that this theoretical failure contributed to the recurrent contradictions in the practice of the anarchist movement.

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the revolutionary potential of classes was most significantly, therefore, a dispute over the place of the peasants in history. Bakunin believed that in the most industrialized Western countries the proletariat is the most revolutionary class, but that in less developed countries, like Russia in his time, the peasants could play a more revolutionary role.[28] He criticizes the Marxist view that the defeats of the peasants, with the consequent growth of state power and capitalist economic relations, has been a progressive development in the more "advanced" countries, and that it should be followed in others.[29] He believes that the peasants in many countries are capable of moving directly from their existing state of oppression into a form of libertarian socialism. He maintains that they will support such a transformation to a large degree out of self-interest. Because they do not wish to continue to be exploited by landowners, taxed by the state, or conscripted into standing armies, the alternative of communal management of production, abolition of the centralized state, and reliance on popular militias for self-defense, he argues, will seem appealing to them.[30] Significantly, in Spain, the country in which there has been the largest movement based on principles close to Bakunin's, when the time came to put the ideas into practice, the result more than verified his predictions. While the urban proletariat was highly successful in establishing the first stages of libertarian socialism in the form of worker self-management, the peasants went much further and began to institute libertarian communism. They proved much more prepared for advances like communal management, the abolition of money, and distribution according to need.[31] Furthermore, most of the important revolutions since Bakunin's time have taken place in primarily peasant societies, and have depended on the discontent and rebellion of the peasants for whatever success they achieved. Bakunin would argue that their failure (in the form of the institution of a new class domination) has largely been the result of the absence of a self-conscious and organized libertarian movement among those peasants, who almost inevitably have had the correct libertarian "instincts."[32]

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28. Maximoff, *op.cit.*, p. 280.

29. Dolgoff, *op.cit.*, p. 310.

30. Maximoff, *op.cit.*, pp. 404-405. Whatever the merits of Bakunin's arguments in other areas, he seemed greatly overly optimistic in his attempts to apply these ideas to the French peasantry. Marx's analysis in the *Eighteenth Brumaire* seems much more convincing.

30. See Sam Dolgoff, ed., *The Anarchist Collectives* (New York, 1974); Leval's *Collectives in the Spanish Revolution,* and Augustine Souchy's works in German, French and Spanish on collectivization. Yet, the impressive accomplishments of the Spanish Revolution should never blind us to its serious shortcomings. One cannot overlook the inadequate development of critical and revolutionary consciousness among the Spanish people, the economistic tendencies of the anarchosyndicalist movement, the existence of elitism, hero-worship and machismo, the insufficient attention given to fundamental cultural questions like the position of women, and the serious problem of syndical egoism which appeared in many collectivized areas. Recent evidence of the shortcomings of the revolution ahs been presented in Ronald Fraser's *Blood of Spain* (New York, 1979), a magnificent and eloquent history based on reminiscences by survivors of the Civil War period.

32. For an example of such an analysis of the Russian Revolution, see Voline, *The Unknown*

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What, then, is the constructive program of such a conscious libertarian movement? According to Bakunin, the goal is "the reorganization of each region, taking as its basis and starting point the absolute freedom of individual, productive association, and commune."[33] Free association of productive and (especially) communal groups is the foundation of the new society.[34] It is this "free organization of the working masses from below upwards" that Marx specifically dismissed as "nonsense" in his commentary on Bakunin's *Statism and Anarchy*,[35] and it is the central practical issue in their dispute. For Bakunin, the new society and the movement that creates it must be based on voluntary association and federalism. Each primary productive and communal group must be formed out of the voluntary association of its members, and each higher level of association — local, regional, national, and international — must consist of voluntary unions of federations at the lower levels. Direct democracy must be practiced in the primary groups and higher levels must also be as democratic as possible. Furthermore, he supports the fundamental anarchist tenet of the right of each to secede from any communal or productive group that he or she joins, and the corollary principle that each group within a federation must have the right of secession without any penalty beyond the loss of whatever benefits accrue from cooperative endeavor (as, for example, the mutual aid programs that will be instituted by drawing on the diverse resources of large federated groups). Even if an individual should have penalties imposed on him or her because of anti-social acts, that individual should have the right to leave the group (or federation of which the group is a part), although forfeiting in the process all rights within, and protection by, the group.

Clearly, Marx and Bakunin have fundamental disagreements about the process of transition between forms of social organization, about the structure and content of the revolutionary movement, and about the character of the society that is to be established. Whereas Bakunin advocates a decentralist, federalist, anti-authoritarian movement that will develop relations and structures similar to those which are to prevail in the libertarian society toward which it seeks to advance, Marx advocates a centralized, disciplined movement that seeks to capture state power in order to increase that power. In his opinion, only thus can the dominance of obsolete relations of production, the effects of which so thoroughly pervade the entire social fabric, be broken, so that the new revolutionary state can fulfill its task of developing the

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Revolution (Detroit, 1974). See also the important recent work by James Scott on the revolutionary role of the peasants, including "Hegemony and the Peasants" in *Politics and Society*, Vol. 7, pp. 267-296, and "Revolution in the Revolution: Peasants and Commissars" in *Theory and Society*, Vol. 7, pp. 97-134.

33. Lehning, *op.cit.*, p. 67.

34. Although Bakunin's collectivism and syndicalism are often contrasted with the communism of Kropotkin and later anarchists, Bakunin also saw the ultimate goal as a free federation of *communes*.

35. Karl Marx, Frederick Engels and V.I. Lenin, *Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism* (New York, 1972), p. 152.

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productive forces and ushering in the realm of freedom that will result from this development.

According to Bakunin, however, Marx's proposals lead in an entirely different direction. It is his contention that Marx misunderstands the nature of political power and that his analysis of class is quite inadequate. Bakunin holds that those in control of concentrated political power are profoundly affected by their exercise of that power, and that as a group they take on the characteristics of a distinct social class. This is the case even if the rulers have "democratic sentiments or intentions." Social change is not accomplished through mere good intentions, as Marx himself recognizes. Whatever intentions the rulers may have, they are subject to the pervasive effects of their concrete social circumstances. Bakunin argues that we must not forget such "powerful motivating forces" as "institutional positions and their attendant privileges." The goal of social evolution is the abolition of *all* forms of domination, and economic exploitation is not the only form that domination takes. He warns that "political power means domination." The danger is that one form of domination may merely be substituted for another, and that if the newest form masquerades as "socialism" and "revolution" it may prove to be even more difficult to displace than its predecessors were.[36]

Bakunin predicts that Marx's proposals will in practice lead to a new stage of capitalist development. While there may be no contradiction between highly developed productive forces and capitalist relations of production, there *is* a contradiction between capitalist relations of production and a working class that is organized and prepared to destroy these relations and replace them by means of a thoroughgoing program of social transformation. A revolutionary movement based on a program of state capitalism can, however, save the day for capitalism. "This new statist system, basing itself on the alleged *sovereignty* of the so-called *will of the people*,. . .incorporates the two necessary conditions for the progress of capitalism: state centralization, and the actual submission of the sovereign people to the intellectual governing minority, who, while claiming to represent the people, unfailingly exploits them."[37] Under such a regime, hierarchy will still remain, since political power will be distributed unequally. Even if formal economic equality were established (which Bakunin doubts will happen, since he expects those with political power to claim economic privileges), economic power will still be unequal, since the control of surplus production will be in the hands of the leaders of the centralized state. The plight of the workers will remain in many ways the same. They will still labor under a regimented, mechanized, hierarchical system of production, and they will still not have direct democratic control over the product of their labor. The forces in control of society will still seem remote and alien. This powerlessness of the workers will only grow as the rulers solidify their class position and as high technology, under centralized control, makes the decision-making and

36. Dolgoff, p. 388.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 336-337.

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production processes increasingly incomprehensible and mystifying.

At this point Bakunin is engaged in an analysis that (whether he realized it or not) is one with the methodology of Marx, in so far as the latter remains true to his critical project. Bakunin, having accepted Marx's critique of bourgeois ideology as the theoretical construct which both legitimates and veils the power relations of capitalist society, is extending this critique to Marxism as the emerging ideology of a developing social class, a new class whose power is rooted in the growth of centralized planning and specialized technique. On the one hand, this technobureaucratic class absorbs and expands the functions of previous bureaucracies, and utilizes statist ideology, which presents political domination as necessary for social order, to legitimate its existence. But, on the other hand, it incorporates the new hierarchical system of relations developing out of high technology, and legitimates the resulting domination through the ideology of productivity and economic growth. The result is a highly integrated system of planning and control, which can bypass the long process of synthetic rationalization which is necessary to achieve such a level of order and stability in societies where technobureaucratic functions continue to be distributed among competing systems of power and authority. Bakunin's originality consisted in his recognition, at a very early stage, of both the political-bureaucratic aspects and the scientific-technical side of such a structure, and in his perception of the nature of its legitimating underpinnings.

"The State," Bakunin asserts, "has always been the patrimony of some privileged class: a priestly class, an aristocratic class, a bourgeois class. And finally, when all the other classes have exhausted themselves, the State then becomes the patrimony of the bureaucratic class and then falls — or if you will, rises — to the position of a machine."[38] The revolutionary movement will supply an abundance of aspiring political leaders, bureaucrats, and technocrats. If the movement is itself hierarchical, it will both *attract* individuals who find the career of a revolutionary political leader appealing to their desire for status and position (especially if their ideological commitments close traditional avenues to power), and it will also *produce* an attachment to power, prestige, and privilege among those who occupy high positions in the movement. When the goal of seizure of state power and further centralization of social institutions is achieved, the revolutionary elite can then take their positions in the expanded hierarchy and recruit new members for the remaining positions.

Had Bakunin limited his attack on Marx to a discussion of the dangers of centralization and hierarchical movements for social change, he would have

38. *Ibid.*, p. 318. Bakunin's position is thus consistent with the emergence of a technobureaucratic class, not only as established through authoritarian socialist movements, but also as such a class grows within bourgeois society and challenges the hegemony of the traditional bourgeoisie itself. An important discussion of this development and its peculiar means of ideological legitimation is presented by Claus Offe in "Political Authority and Class Structures — An Analysis of Late Capitalist Societies," in *International Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 11, pp. 73-105.

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made a significant contribution to the critique of forms of domination. However, his analysis gains further relevance when he deals with the topic of science and technology in relation to the development of state capitalism and the new elite. This analysis helps us to uncover the implications of the convergence of two aspects of Marx's thought: his defense of the necessity of the development of productive forces, and his advocacy of political centralization.

In *God and the State* Bakunin discusses the dangers inherent in a system that unites political power with technical-scientific expertise. He fears that the spontaneity of life will be crushed by the imposition of plans developed "from above" by experts. Having considerable faith in the creative capacities of freely associated individuals, he concludes that life is "an infinitely greater thing than science." He argues that whatever the merits of the centralized plan, it removes creativity and responsibility from each person. In spite of its promises of future liberation, it obstructs the general development of those qualities that are specifically human; it creates "a society, not of men, but of brutes." Furthermore, while he begins his argument by accepting the hypothesis that the plans will be motivated by benevolence ("inspired by the purest love of truth"), he contends that this will not in fact occur. An additional motive, the maintenance of power and privilege of the planners, will come into play.

These criticisms are in some ways an extension of those made against more traditional forms of bureaucratic domination. However, in the case of technical-scientific control, additional factors must be considered. One of the most important of these is the mystification of social processes engendered by the vastly increased specialization which takes place under large-scale, high technology. The integral education of society, which Bakunin and many other anarchists have advocated, becomes increasingly "impractical." The resulting maldistribution of knowledge, expertise, and control will result in an unprecedented form of domination by the new dominant class of techno-bureaucrats: "So there will be no more class, but a government, and please note, an extremely complicated government which, not content with governing and administering the masses politically, like all other governments of today, will also administer them economically, by taking over the production and *fair* sharing of wealth, agriculture, the establishment and development of factories, the organization and control of trade, and lastly the injection of capital into production by a single banker, the State. All this will require vast knowledge and a lot of heads brimful of brains [a reference to a description of Marx by one of his supporters at the Hague Congress]. It will be the reign of the *scientific mind*, the most aristocratic, despotic, arrogant and contemptuous of all regimes. There will be a new class, a new hierarchy of real or bogus learning, and the world will be divided into a dominant, science-based minority and a vast, ignorant majority. And then let the ignorant masses beware!"[39] Just as Bakunin could now point to the

39. Lehning, *op.cit.*, p. 266.

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undermining of revolutionary developments by the prevalence of centralist, hierarchical tendencies within the revolutionary movements, so he could note the emergence of technobureaucratic domination in societies where the program of authoritarian socialism has prevailed. The historical importance of Bakunin's critique lies in the fact that while numerous disillusioned Marxists, desperate to hold on to at least some of their faith, have blamed this monstrous development (reduced to a "deformation") on the betrayal of various individual leaders (guilty of revisionism, right and left "deviations," but never a fundamentally faulty theoretical framework), or on premature action (a securely circular analysis), Bakunin long ago showed that some of its roots can be found in elements of Marx's own theory: his centralism and his faith in bourgeois technology, the technique of domination.

This is not to deny that there is another side to Marx: a side that one might well wish to have been of more historical importance. Much of his analysis follows his intention of pursuing a dialectical approach, and does not impose on the phenomena a preconceived scheme of economic determination. An excellent example is an unpublished letter to a Russian journal in Geneva, wherein he rejects the attempt to transform his "historical sketch of the genesis of capitalism in Western Europe into a historico-philosophic theory of the general path of development prescribed by fate to all nations, whatever the historical circumstances in which they find themselves."[40] There are also well-known discussions in which he treats revolutionary activity as much more than a mere product of the development of the productive forces, as in his affirmation of the irreducibility of praxis and critique in the "Theses on Feuerbach."

Furthermore, a definite anti-bureaucratic and anti-statist tendency runs through Marx's thought. In the *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, for example, he attacks bureaucracy for its formalism, its secrecy, its authoritarianism, and its promotion of careerism.[41] In *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, Marx analyzes very perceptively the dialectical interaction between bourgeois property relations and the rise of bureaucracy, showing how the reciprocal relation moves society further in the direction of atomization, simplification, and the growth of state power.[42]

It is impossible to deny that Marx's thought contains a powerful critique of the state and bureaucracy, and that it also has certain decentralist elements. But neither is it possible to maintain that Marx successfully escaped an attachment to centralist and authoritarian structures that are inseparable

40. Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence* (Moscow, 1975), p. 293. Unfortunately, even this affirmation of the "theory of discontinuous social formations," as exemplified by Marx's treatment of the fate of the Ancient Roman economy (p. 294), while it implies a rejection of the most simplistic versions of technological and economic determinism, does not constitute a denial of more sophisticated, yet still inadequate, base-superstructure models. Neither does it conflict with the affirmation of the project of liberation through productive development.

41. See selections on bureaucracy in Tucker, *op.cit.*, pp. 23-25.

42. Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (New York, 1963), pp. 128-129.

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from statist and bureaucratic forms of domination. With his almost unbounded faith in the liberating potentialities inherent in material progress, Marx was able to dismiss the spectre of renewed domination conjured up by critics like Bakunin. As he contends in the 1852 edition of *The Eighteenth Brumaire,* centralization only produces domination so long as it plays a part in the development of bourgeois society. In a revolutionary society centralization will not lead to the growth of bureaucracy, nor will bureaucratization be necessary to achieve centralization. "The demolition of the state machine will not endanger centralization. Bureaucracy is only the low and brutal form of centralization that is still afflicted with its opposite, with feudalism."[43] The possibility that even greater centralization and technological development could generate a new bureaucratism having little or nothing to do with feudal remnants is too great a threat to Marx's assumptions about historical progress to achieve serious attention. Faced with such a possibility, Marx is forced to resort to the most blatant ideological blocking, as is attested to by the abuse and ridicule he heaps on Bakunin in place of a confrontation with the content of the latter's arguments. With the victory of the forces of the proletariat, centralization *cannot* lead to bureaucratic despotism. One who thinks so can only be "a charlatan and an ignoramus."

A similar utopianism can be perceived in the various anti-statist remarks that appear in Marx's writings. He notes, for example, that the state is capable of developing a "relative autonomy" and the way opens for the interpretation of political domination as a constituent in a larger system of domination. It will then appear as a totality within a greater totality, displaying immanent processes of development, yet interacting with the other constituents of the more comprehensive system. Yet Marx refuses to allow this aspect of his theory of the state to develop. As Miliband points out in regard to both Marx and Engels, "despite the refinements and qualifications they occasionally introduced in their discussion of the state — notably to account for a certain degree of independence which they believed the state could enjoy in 'exceptional circumstances' — they never departed from the view that in capitalist society the state was above all the coercive instrument of a ruling class, itself defined in terms of its ownership of the means of production."[44] The decision for this model of the state avoids the threat to the productivist model of liberation and the strategy of centralist politics entailed in the alternative one. The dangers of statism can then be limited to the pre-revolutionary era of economic class conflict, and the troubling spectre of domination of the masses under socialism can be exorcised. As a result, the concentration of economic and political power in the centralized state can be reconciled with the most thoroughgoing "anti-statism."

In view of this utopian rather than practical nature of Marx's anti-bureaucratism and anti-statism, it is not surprising to find that his libertarianism in regard to the Paris Commune is more apparent than real. It is clear that, in view of the enormous working-class sympathy for the

43. *Ibid.*, p. 148.

44. Ralph Miliband, *The State in Capitalist Society* (New York, 1969), p. 5.

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Commune, it was politically expedient for Marx to ally himself strongly with it, in spite of his irreconcilable differences with the Blanquist and mutualist elements that constituted its most active factions. Furthermore, he could not fail to be moved by its working class character, its heroism, and its tragic end. Yet, he hedged a bit from the beginning. Its "true secret," he says, was that it was a working class government,[45] and it seems that this fact and not its libertarian initiatives were seen as the basis for its great historical importance. In the first outline of *The Civil War in France,* Marx notes that the actions of the Commune were necessary because "the centralized and organized governmental power" was "the master instead of the servant of society."[46] The validity of centralized government per se is, of course, not questioned. Ten years later, in a letter to Domela-Nieuwenhuis, he concludes that "this was merely the rising of a city under exceptional conditions, the majority of the Commune was in no wise socialist, nor could it be."[47] The best strategy, he says, would have been a compromise with Versailles.[48] In view of such statements, and more importantly, in the context of Marx's consistent advocacy of centralist programs and of the necessary part that these programs play in his theory of social development, the attempt to construct a *libertarian* Marxism by citing Marx's own proposals for social change present insuperable difficulties.

Yet, some wish to adopt Marx's method of dialectical analysis and critique of ideology as their approach to social theory, and to unite this with a political program that finds inspiration in Marx's more favorable judgments on the Paris Commune (or what they would like to think Marx approved of in the Commne). If they do so, whether they call the result Marxism or not, they reach a position that seems in many ways more in the spirit of Bakunin than Marx. It can be argued that while it is quite possible to construct a Marxism that derives its essential presuppositions and proposals for organization from the work of Marx himself, while ignoring the implications of his critical and dialectical methodology, it may very well be impossible to pursue the anarchist project — the critique and transcendence of all forms of domination — without adopting this aspect of Marx's position. Whatever the limitations of Bakunin's viewpoint, this is, in fact, what he was doing when he argued for a more dialectical approach to the dynamics of political power and technological development, and for extending the critique of ideology to the emergence of technobureaucracy.

45. Marx and Engels, *On the Paris Commune* (Moscow, 1971), p. 75.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 153.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 293.
48. *Ibid.* Furthermore, as Bookchin notes, even when Marx made statements in support of the Commune, what he supported is not as libertarian as is sometimes supposed. In praising the synthesis of executive and legislative functions under the Commune, Marx advocated a structure which "simply identified the process of policy-making, a function that rightly should belong to the people in assembly, with the technical execution of these policies, a function that could be left to strictly administrative bodies subject to rotation, recall, limitations of tenure, and, whenever possible, selection by sortition." Cf. Murray Bookchin, "Beyond Neo-Marxism," in *Telos*, No. 36 (Summer 1978), pp. 6ff.

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WHAT GOOD IS SCHOPENHAUER? REMARKS ON HORKHEIMER'S PESSIMISM

by Gerard Raulet*

In one of his last essays Horkheimer writes: "Schopenhauer's pessimistic doctrine is a consolation."[1] To grasp the meaning of this apparent resignation one must recall the fate of the Frankfurt School. Faced with Soviet Marxism and the "impotence of the workers against the aggressive mechanisms of authoritarian states," or the disappearance of the working class as defined by Marx, from the 1930s Critical Theory undertook to reconsider a theory of emancipation. Despite the theoretical retreat to which it was forced, Critical Theory sought to determine where Marxist critique could be anchored in order to grasp the positive through its negativity. In accepting this role, Critical Theory went back to philosophy, particularly to classical idealism, which it sought to use in a progressive way, e.g., by using Kantian practical reason to keep open the dimension of a history-to-be-made. There is nothing pessimistic about such an enterprise. What, then, is the use of Schopenhauer, whom Horkheimer emphasizes so much after the mid-1950s?

It is tempting to link the lack of practice to which Critical Theory is condemned with Schopenhauer's growing importance in Horkheimer's thinking. Horkheimer admits this influence in the preface to the new edition of *Critical Theory*, where he links Schopenhauerian pessimism to the present impossibility of relating theory and practice and so, at worst, depicts himself as a *conscious* victim.[2] Moreover, he makes pessimism an *active* element, alone capable of safeguarding the consciousness and critical character of Critical Theory, thus avoiding its degeneration into ready-made recipes for action.

Optimism was greatly shaken by new socio-economic conditions. Such conditions inextricably joined militant optimism ("the desire to comprehend and transform") and pessimism. Horkheimer's text do not show an evolution from optimism to pessimism. Rather, at the core of a shaken but tenacious optimism, pessimism acquires a new critical thrust. Rather than speak of Horkheimer as resigned in the last years of his life, it is more productive to turn to his 1930 writings, particularly "Materialism and Metaphysics."[3] Pessimism here has the same function as in Kant.[4] It is indispensable for critique and reveals Critical Theory's *epistemological profile* in relation to optimism. The use of Schopenhauer in Critical Theory reveals less a regressive

*Translated by David J. Parent.

1. "Schopenhauers Denken im Verhältnis zu Wissenschaft und Religion" in *Sozialphilosophische Studien* (Frankfurt am Main, 1972), p. 154.
2. Max Horkheimer, *Critical Theory: Selected Essays*, trans. M.J. O'Connell and others (New York, 1972), pp. v and ix.
3. Now in *ibid.*, pp. 9ff.
4. Cf. P.L. Assoun and G. Raulet, *Marxisme et Theorie Critique* (Paris, 1978).

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repetition — the death-impulse of a theory unable to live its practice — than a reflexive repetition in which a discredited theory seeks renewal.

Schopenhauer's pessimism toward every intervention of reason in history and his metaphysics of illusion helps us understand the necessary role of fiction in a theory confronted with a world ruled by illusion and blindness. Fiction becomes the very essence of all possible theory when the historical world appears ahistorical. Fictional actors displace real actors: those of the class struggle.

Of course, Horkheimer avoids a *metaphysics* of pessimism, but he does follow Schopenhauer in denouncing the false rationality of the real — the central theme of Critical Theory. At most, the metaphysical dimension of pessimism will be used as a qualifier: "Metaphysical pessimism, always an implicit element in every genuinely materialist philosophy..." Schopenhauer and Marx, the two pillars of Critical Theory, represent *two aspects of the same relation to the given*: the negative aspect differentiating itself into optimism and pessimism. In "Critical Theory Yesterday and Today,"[5] *theoretical* pessimism is related to "practical optimism" and thus forestalls any possible misinterpretation of Marxist optimism. Thus, optimism and pessimism are related from the very beginning; as the following passage from the 1930s makes clear: "Since its beginning, however, dialectical thought has meant the most advanced state of knowledge.... For the thrust toward a rational society, which admittedly seems to exist today only in the realms of fantasy, is really innate in every man. *That is not a claim that should bring a sigh of relief.* For the realization of possibilities depends on historical conflicts. The truth about the future does not take the form of a verification of data which differ from others only in having some special importance.... And even after the new society shall have come into existence, the happiness of its members will not make up for the wretchedness of those who are being destroyed in our contemporary society.... A philosophy that thinks to find peace within itself, in any kind of truth whatsoever, has therefore nothing to do with the critical theory."[6] Critical pessimism is sustained by a debt to mankind; Critical Theory can never make peace with reality. Schopenhauer's role is to prevent the easy transformation of Kant or Marx into a vulgar Leibniz.

In broadly defining the function and place of pessimism, we can distinguish between the critique of rationalism and the critique of optimism. Pessimism, the best-known aspect of Schopenhauer's philosophy, is only meaningful in terms of its object: the critique of the rational world order propounded by philosophers from Leibniz to Hegel. Linked to the very constitution of Critical Theory, Schopenhauer is one of the philosophical mediations which enabled Critical Theory to reject Hegel's reconciliation. Just as for Marx the state of German affairs was Hegelian only in philosophical consciousness, so for Critical Theory Hegel represents a premature impasse in theory as in

5. "Kritische Theorie, Gestern und Heute," in Max Horkheimer, *Gesellschaft im Uebergang* (Frankfurt, 1972).

6. *Critical Theory, op.cit.*, pp. 251ff.

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reality. It is confronted by two obstacles: the market economy and Soviet Marxism. Unlike Marx, against this double impasse, Critical Theory invoked an irrationalist current. Schopenhauer, a critic of Hegel, gave Critical Theory the means to reject *both* the rationality of Western economies and the degeneration of Marxism into a self-contained rationality.

The essay "Materialism and Metaphysics" starts with Dilthey and his "insight that every metaphysician aims at establishing a unified and universally valid system but that not one of them has ever succeeded in taking a single real step in this direction."[7] Horkheimer views it as liberalism's "critique of the claim to absoluteness made by its own thinking."[8] By this he means that "the idea of unbroken harmony between reality and reason belongs to the liberal phase. It corresponds to a social economy marked by a plurality of individual entrepreneurs. The image of their interests as harmonizing and producing a frictionless functioning of the whole economy was applied to society as a whole and to its various social classes."[9] Clearly, however, Horkheimer does not accept the relativist historical typology of world views in which Dilthey's critique of metaphysics culminates: if, no longer believing in the validity of any system, Dilthey saw only a succession of cultural totalities evaluating one another, it is because he failed to recognize "social conditions."[10] Dilthey is thus brought in only to shatter the totalistic claims of metaphysics. After this prologue, however, the essential question arises: can we, along with Dilthey, see materialism as one metaphysics among others, and if so, why? Materialism, Hegel replies, rejoins metaphysics when it erases "the irreducible tension between the concept and the object": true materialism, on the contrary, is based on the awareness that "both these elements determine each other continuously" and are constantly being modified.[11] This dialectic never ceases: "Even in a society that would freely determine what is to be, nature, however gradual the change in it might be, would be a factor militating against such an identification of knowledge and object."

Pessimism represents the theoretical posture imposed by the critique of a rationality that true materialism opposes by refusing to collapse subject and object. But true materialism also opposes any spiritualism that hypostatizes the individual into a monad and denies the importance of objective transformations. The use of irrationalism serves only to reactivate the role of the subject and is abandoned as soon as there is any risk of hypostatizing the subject by ignoring material conditions. Dilthey finally is relegated to bourgeois metaphysics since, for him, "the historical relativity of the various philosophical systems was realized not through knowledge of the social conditions governing their elaboration, but with the help of hypostatized concepts of man, life, personality, and creative development...thus

7. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

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transforming the history of intellectual culture into a new metaphysics. . . 'the unity of the soul'."[12] Irrationalism and bad materialism are jointly rejected.

"Materialism and Metaphysics" also illuminates Critical Theory's use of Kant. Horkheimer credits Kant with having formulated on the one hand "the entire secret of metaphysics" by affirming in the preface to the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* that "in *a priori* knowledge nothing can be attributed to the objects except what the thinking subject draws from itself," and on the other hand with having recognized the unfinished nature of knowledge and the world. But it is precisely the "secret of metaphysics" enunciated by Kant that is reinterpreted negatively by Schopenhauer. The subject becomes so central that nothing can transcend subjectivism, and the phenomenon, which Kant says is not an appearance, reacquires its Greek meaning.[13] While the Marburg School's return to Kant strives to separate the transcendental *a priori* from the innate one, Schopenhauer turns Kantian subjectivity in a psychological and anthropological direction. He thus gives priority to the 1781 edition of *Critique*, in which Kant is really an idealist, as opposed to the 1787 edition, where he is a realist. In the latter text, according to Schopenhauer, Kant errs in attacking Berkeley, who had recognized that "what is extended in space, i.e., the objective world, material as such, exists merely in our perception."[14] Though he says that "the matter of intuition is given from the outside," according to Schopenhauer the first edition entitles us to see a defect in Kant's logic where he bases the existence of the object on the law of causality after having shown that the latter was *a priori*.[15] Kant "took a decisive step when he showed that man's moral conduct is independent of the laws that govern phenomena," but he did not recognize the same dichotomy in theoretical knowledge. When Schopenhauer speaks of experience, on the contrary, it is a question of the *will*: the will is the object of experimentation in the phenomenal event of which it is the essence. How then could one know this event, know anything other than the will as the object of direct and intuitive knowledge? Between the phenomenon and this intuitive knowledge there is an insurmountable hiatus; the intellect loses its primacy and the will prevents us from elaborating a world order by seeing reasons in reality and necessity in phenomena. Strictly speaking, causality is not denied, but it lacks a cause to relate to; it lacks a content essential to the representations it connects. Insofar as causality from the viewpoint of the intellect is the same thing as contingency from the viewpoint of the will, causality no longer presupposes a principle of sufficient reason. The same critique applies to teleology: no cause for causality, no end for teleology; the ends observable in phenomenal nature are not attributable to an overall plan. Thus any optimism based on the idea of an overall plan of creation is rejected. This is the basis of the impossibility of visualizing any reconciliation

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 11ff.
13. Arthur Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (Frankfurt, 1968), Vol. I, pp. 567ff.
14. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, par. 1.
15. Cf. Th. Ribot, *La Philosophie de Schopenhauer* (Paris, 1914), p. 22.

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of the concept with the world. Faced with the illusion of an infallible rationality, which reveals itself to be the upside-down world of the capitalist economy, Critical Theory made an explosive use of this analysis. "The Dialectics of Reason" showed that, in Kantian terms, this rationalism results from an extension of technical reason, i.e., from an illicit extension of theoretical reason to the detriment of practical reason. Critical Theory challenged this imperialism by challenging the infallibility of causal knowledge.

As mentioned earlier, in the 1972 preface Horkheimer ascribed Schopenhauer's philosophy to the rupture undergone by the theory-practice relation: "application of the critical theory to practice in changed historical circumstances can only accelerate the very process that must be denounced."[16] The critique of rationalism not only provided the means to denounce it, it also enabled Critical Theory to make sense of its own absence of practice. Schopenhauer provided the heuristic and analogical means to understand the new situation, and thus it allowed a return to theoretical combat. Here we see again that Horkheimer's pessimism is not a late admission of Critical Theory's impotence, but is, from the beginning, central to the development of critical vs. traditional theory.

In Schopenhauer, as in Horkheimer, the theory-practice relation is dominated by the alternatives of happiness and unhappiness. *The Aphorisms,* the first of Schopenhauer's works read by Horkheimer, contends that wisdom is the "art of accomplishing one's existence with the most possible pleasure and happiness."[17] Schopenhauer declares his aim to be immanent happiness, which must be understood with reference to Kant: the goal is happiness, not morality. He contrasts two types of happiness, "initiation to a happy existence" and "initiation to felicity." Eudemonism, he adds immediately, is impossible. Happiness is essentially a function of the individual's personality, which is not modifiable: only destiny varies. The meeting of personality and destiny produces nothing new and constantly confirms human impotence and folly. The "action of time and the instability of things" denies history;[18] it is the "sanction of destiny that relentlessly reproduces what has already been" ("Dialectics of Reason"). This "same thing" is for Schopenhauer the unchanging object of true philosophy.

Obviously, the omnipotence of destiny corresponds to the practical impotence of theory. And this practical impotence is due to the fact that theory can only grasp action *after the fact* in the form of rational knowledge. In action, irrational, subconscious forces are at work — "innate concrete principles" opposed to the "abstract principles" of knowledge — or subjective maxims, dictums. The latter has Kantian overtones, but for Schopenhauer there is no universal moral law: "We will certainly not expect to find in this ethical thesis, either precepts, or a theory of duties, or a universal principle of morality that would be like the general receptacle toward which all virtues

16. *Critical Theory, op.cit.,* p. v.
17. In *Sämtliche Werke, op.cit.,* Vol. IV.
18. *Sozialphilosophische Studien, op.cit.,* p. 71.

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tend. Nor will we speak of 'unconditional duty,' or of a "law of liberty,' for each contains a contradiction."[19] Thus even the power of anticipation possessed by Kant's theory of practical reason disappears. Schopenhauer assimilates the general maxims to heteronomous principles. He does not hold to the Kantian dualism of theoretical and practical reason, so this dualism can no longer be resolved by the opposition between morality and the dictum: "It may be true in theory but worthless in practice." The Kantian idea is of no more value than calculation (though it is a proof of intelligence, in the Schopenhauerian sense of the term). Since Critical Theory accepted and transposed this criticism of Kant without reservations, it is understandable that it could not rediscover the usable model of Kantian practical reason. This is precisely what Horkheimer claims in "Materialism and Metaphysics," when he contrasts unhappiness and happiness: happiness can no longer be understood as Kant understood it: "The conclusion 'that something is (which determines the ultimate possible end) because something ought to happen' is an inevitable one, he says. However, he does not simply note the existence of this hope which is directed to happiness ('for all hoping is directed to happiness'), but gives it a philosophical basis; thus his originally rationalist analysis of reason moves notably closer to a dogmatically metaphysical system such as he was opposing."[20] At the very point where Schopenhauer seems to escape from Critical Theory, his dialectical use saves him *against a bad heritage of Kant*. Schopenhauer serves to transcend any metaphysical optimism — even the generally superior Kantian one.

From the critique of rationalism we turn to the use of *pessimism*. In retracing the two stages of the recourse to Schopenhauer, which coincide with two levels in Horkheimer's approach, the critique of rationalism presents no irreversible irrational consequences for Critical Theory and the critique of optimism is aimed at a specific optimism with no one-sided pessimistic consequences. Similarly, the critique of rationalism has no definitive pessimistic consequences for the power of historical reason, and the critique of optimism in reason does not lead theory to accept irrationality once and for all, i.e., to adopt a position opposed to its critical mission.

Schopenhauer took a position opposite to Leibniz: in his "inverted theodicy" the world is the worst of all possible worlds, perfect in its details, unjustifiable in its totality. But while use of Schopenhauer against Leibniz's optimism is clear, such is not the case with regard to the practical philosophies just mentioned, particularly Kant's. In his commentary on Voltaire's *Candide* in *The World as Will and Idea,* Schopenhauer followed Kant: "Today philosophy professors are striving on all sides to put Leibniz back on his feet with his absurdities and even to glorify him, while they try to debase Kant.... In the *Theodicy* as a compendium and methodical exposition of optimism, I can see no other merit than that of having later furnished the great Voltaire the occasion for his immortal *Candide*." The

19. *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung, op.cit.,* par. 53.
20. *Critical Theory, op.cit.,* p. 23.

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reason for the attitude of the philosophy professors is that "*The Critique of Pure Reason* does not allow one to palm off Jewish mythology as philosophy nor to speak of the soul as a given reality of a well-known, well-accredited person, without accounting for how one has arrived at this concept, and of the right to make philosophical use of it."[21] For Kant the immortality of the soul becomes a *postulate* of practical reason. Kant's great merit is thus to have transformed primary categories into postulates, i.e., categories of practical reason. *Schopenhauer appropriates Kant, insofar as the latter converted metaphysical into practical optimism.* Once this conversion is achieved, optimism and pessimism become the expression of the illusion or the disillusionment of a discovery: history and a certain relation of theory to practice. Kant paved the way for the use that Critical Theory makes of optimism and pessimism, which maintain in Critical Theory the Kantian "as if." Pessimism and optimism conjoin in Kant to determine both the desolate spectacle of history and possibilities for improvement.[22] But this functional relation still ends in a justification of history, or of "the plan of nature," implying a recourse to Providence. Here, for Horkheimer, Kant retreats into metaphyhsical optimism.[23] Thus, Horkheimer followed Schopenhauer beyond his critique of Leibniz to his *critique of all teleology* in the universe. Schopenhauer serves to counteract the resurgence of the divine plan by restoring the primacy of radical evil: "Schopenhauer rightly accepted the deep truth of the doctrine of radical evil."[24] This is the meaning of the rejection of eudemonism in the preface to the *Aphorisms*. Schopenhauer thereby guards against any optimistic illusion and ushers in a critical attitude.[25]

The Schopenhauerian "inversion" of theodicy and his critique of teleology make it possible to break once and for all with the 18th century, notably with the teleological argument at the root of its optimism: "The desire to live seems to us, objectively, like folly and, subjectively, like an illusion that engulfs every living being and makes it apply every effort of its faculties in pursuit of an end without value. But a more attentive examination will show us here too that it is far more a blind impulse, an instinct without basis and without motive."[26] If there is no divine world order, the argument applies also to Hegel's pantheism.

If we uncritically accept Schopenhauer's argument, we would also have to deny all becoming — as did the contemporary pantheism he attacked. For Schopenhauer, becoming is an illusion, a ruse for perpetuating the will; time is but the repetition of the present, the implacable sanction of an always

21. *Die Welt...*, *op.cit.*, p. 746.
22. Cf. his *The Idea of History from a Cosmological Viewpoint*, 2nd proposition.
23. Cf. "Schopenhauer und die Gesellschaft," in *Sozialphilosophische Studien*, *op.cit.*, p. 72.
24. "Pessimismus Heute," in *ibid.*, p. 140.
25. This is why Horkheimer asserts that, despite his demonstration of the vanity of theory, practice, and hence of philosophy of history, a less conservative reading can be made of Schopenhauer than his ideal of *ataraxy* (impassiveness) would suggest. Cf. "Schopenhauer und die Gesellschaft," *op.cit.*, p. 71.
26. *Die Welt...*, *op.cit.*, p. 462.

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identical destiny. What is essential is always contained in the present; and history, which seeks to replace depth by length and width, shows nothing but the same thing under different forms.[27] In "Schopenhauer and Society," Horkheimer criticized this hostility to philosophy of history[28] and, in "Materialism and Metaphysics," without explicitly naming Schopenhauer, he rejected that type of historical pessimism to which the Schopenhauerian line of argument leads.[29] To counteract this pessimism, Horkheimer emphasized in Schopenhauer the passages where he rediscovers the species; these passages hark back to the Christian perspective. "For Schopenhauer, as far as I can judge, pessimism is not absolute, though the present situation would justify such absoluteness. He taught that the return of those who freed themselves from self-love to the heart of the universal will constitutes a sort of redemption. Thus he is here, as in other passages of his work, in agreement with Christianity. He envisages a consolation."[30] Schopenhauer even has a vision of the ideal society: "In many places, the passion of thought goes beyond the verdict of social pessimism. From the first volume of *The World as Will and Idea* there is the idea of the fool's paradise as it could be realized in an enlightened state where a truly harmonious order prevailed. Schopenhauer does, of course, list the reasons why that is impossible: the idleness, the boredom that would follow, the little private intrigues and finally wars and overpopulation."[31]

Horkheimer constantly emphasized the negative aspects of this vision in order to criticize present society and at the same time show that Schopenhauer's thought sketches *negatively* the idea of the ideal society. And it is this *negative* presence that makes his thinking valuable to Critical Theory and enables it to rejuvenate the heritage of the Christian and Kantian perspectives, which otherwise would remain an "inauthentic jargon of the Good," to use Adorno's phraseology. The dialectical use of the Enlightenment and of Schopenhauer meet in the by no means contradictory conjunction of an optimism and a pessimism stripped of metaphysics.

The present situation certainly engenders great pessimism. Yet, as Horkheimer declares in the 1972 essay "Pessimismus Heute," this pessimism inspires a "practice that is not without optimism." More specifically, in "Critical Theory Yesterday and Today," he mentions what allegedly points to a revision of Critical Theory: "What does the optimism I share with Adorno consist in? In this: that we ought, despite all pros and cons, to try to do and impose what we consider good and true. Thus, our principle was: be pessimist in theory and optimist in practice."[32] "Theoretical pessimism" makes it possible to understand practical optimism: to be pessimist toward theory is to reject metaphysics, to reject other-worldly hope and to reject those illusions that might be called metaphysics of science and technology: "The

27. Cf. Ribot, *op.cit.*, p. 142.
28. Cf. "Schopenhauer und die Gesellschaft," *op.cit.*, pp. 70-71.
29. *Op.cit.*, p. 111.
30. "Pessimismus Heute," *op.cit.*, p. 143.
31. "Schopenhauer und die Gesellschaft," *op.cit.*, p. 74.
32. In *Gesellschaft im Uebergang*, *op.cit.*, pp. 162ff.

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pessimistic philosophy of Schopenhauer is a consolation. Contrary to the spirit prevalent today, his metaphysics provides the deepest foundations of morality without entering into contradiction with exact knowledge, especially in the representation of eternal, supraterrestrial spirits, be they good or bad."

His thinking is not as pessimistic as the absolutization of science.[33] Schopenhauer and his pessimism are fictional actors. Revocable as all fiction, they play the role of vanished actors in the theater of history. Thus, when the administered world gives the illusion of the absence of becoming, Schopenhauer's illusory becoming designates the ideological, metaphysical phenomenon that would tend to affirm theory's renunciation of practice. But the critique of rationalism invites us to identify the theory-practice dichotomy as an effect of the illusions of a certain rationalism. We accept Schopenhauer's critique of rationalism but having agreed with the critique of historical optimism, having rejected metaphysical illusions in the name of the dialectics of optimism and pessimism, we reject his acceptance of pessimism. Finding a theoretical point of departure that enables the apprehension of good under the aspect of evil, the positive under the aspect of the negative, Critical Theory turned theory, which had become Utopian in the bad sense of the word, back against itself. Horkheimer's use of Schopenhauer thus indicates no betrayal. We need not celebrate Horkheimer as a theoretical emigrant reduced to the despair of a man without a country. Critical Theory remains faithful to its program: to see Marxism as a *critical* theory.

33. "Schopenhauers Denken...," *op.cit.*, pp. 154-155.

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HEGEL AND METAPHYSICS

by Alain Manville*

As Fetscher put it in *Marx and Marxism:* "The relation between Marx and Hegel is not an academic problem. The different conceptions of the essential nature of Marx's doctrine correspond to different views concerning Marx's relations to Hegel. These relations in turn have both a theoretical and a political meaning."[1] The following will re-examine one facet of Hegel which has remained obscure and which is Marx's most valuable inheritance from Hegel: the link between Marx's critical project, announced in a September 1843 letter to Ruge — "the relentless critique of everything that exists" [2] — and the revolutionary password of the 11th Thesis on Feuerbach.

Owing to its apparent self-evidence, Marxism has never taken the trouble to critically examine this connection. Yet, from its frequent readings of Hegel,[3] it should have learned to distrust the familiar. Far from merely providing Marxism with a method, as the received teaching informs us, Hegel makes a vital contribution to revolutionary theory, which paves the way for Marx's own work.

Thus, the relation between Marx and Hegel must not be sought in the dialectical method but in Hegel's radical critique of metaphysics. This re-evaluation, therefore, involves an investigation of Marxism's relation to metaphysics. What is needed is to go beyond the critical tradition of Korsch and Lukacs for which method was always its crucial focus. In short, Marx's relation to Hegel cannot be reduced to the conflict between the *idealist* and the *materialist* dialectical method, which reintroduces distinctions already transcended. In fact, the re-introduction of the opposition of materialism and idealism systematically distorts the entire Hegelian conceptual apparatus.[4] Despite their apparent diversity, interpretations of Hegel share one feature: they all locate Hegelian philosophy within the metaphysical tradition. The following will propose a reading of Hegel as radically anti-dogmatic and as dissolving all ontology and metaphysics. This account of Hegel is difficult to

*English translation by David J. Parent.

1. Iring Fetscher, *Marx und der Marxismus* (Munich, 1967), p. 45.

2. Karl Marx, *Die Frühschriften* (Stuttgart, 1971), p. 168. As Althusser has similarly remarked, far from being merely an academic question, Marx's relation to Hegel is "presently both theoretically and politically a decisive question." Louis Althusser, *Lenine et la Philosophie: Juin de Marx et Lenine devant Hegel* (Paris, 1972).

3. In the Preface to the *Phenomenology*, Hegel wrote: "In general, what is well known, precisely because it is well known, is not known. The most common mode of self-delusion and of creating illusions for others is, in knowledge, to presuppose something as being well-known, and to accept it as such. Such knowledge, without being aware that this is happening, refuses to budge despite all discussion." Cf. Hegel, *La Phenomenologie de l'Esprit*, trans. Jean Hyppolite (Paris, 1968), "Preface," p. 28. Also, Hegel, *Werke in zwanzig Banden* (Frankfurt, 1970), Vol. 3, p. 35; and *Sämtliche Werke* (Hamburg, 1969), pp. 28-29.

4. As Heinrich has noted, "For decades the interpreters of Marx's works have been wanting to clarify this (the reversal of Hegelian philosophy), but they have not yet achieved that end." Cf. Dieter Heinrich, *Hegel im Kontext* (Frankfurt, 1975), p. 189.

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provide because Hegel himself did not push his violent opposition to dogmatism to its ultimate consequences. Thus, Hegelian philosophy has retained a deep contradiction.[5] By ignoring this contradiction, the interpretation of Hegelian philosophy in terms of a system of absolute knowledge has prevented recognition of what is at stake.

Hegel's text can be reached only through a reading that reactivates a certain movement of thought and requires doing violence to that text. There are two reasons for this. First, the critical aspect of Hegelian thought has been overlooked because it is presented in the very form it criticizes. Hegel's critical project contains, as Heidegger remarked, "the question, *'What is metaphysics?'* [which is] a metaphysical question [and] it is of the essence of such passages that they must still, to a certain degree, speak the language of what they help to surpass." [6] This situation is intrinsic to all radically critical discourse. Hegel thus recognizes the constitutive rule of metaphysics, which he intends to de-construct. Yet, by subjecting all its theses, concepts and categories to the critical dialectic, he destroys its possibility. The difficulty is in knowing how to read the slight displacement by which Hegel succeeds in breaking free from metaphysics and moving towards a new realm of meaning. Though Hegel's concepts are the same as the ones used by metaphysics, and though in Hegel's text they seem to be articulated in the usual way, through a calculated shading or a displaced logic, they become subject to a different order. they are transformed into non-concepts — something unthinkable for metaphysics, which cannot rediscover in them the security of finite determinations. Thus, though apparently unchanged, the same concepts have undergone a change of meaning and have been liberated from their ancient metaphysical task by the almost imperceptible change of perspective.

The Hegelian deconstruction of metaphysics thus falls under what Derrida called the structure of the double valency, "according to which each concept necessary receives two similar valencies — repetition without identity — one inside and the other outside the de-constructed system, a double reading and a double writing." [7] This is the source of the fundamental ambiguity of the Hegelian attempt: negative destruction that opens the way to a different discourse, or positive renewal seeking that absolute knowledge other discourses had failed to achieve. This double valence also results in Hegel's uncertain position, which is simultaneously inside and outside of metaphysics: *inside* since it provides an immanent critique, and at the same time *outside*, since it is organized according to a viewpoint that escapes metaphysics.

The first difficulty of recognition is duplicated by a second one, i.e., the fact that Hegel himself in his work of critique progressively succumbs to the logic of what he was de-constructing. The ontological-metaphysical past

5. Thus, J. Derrida could state in an interview collected in *Positions* that: "I see very well that Hegel's text is necessarily fissured, that it surpasses and differs from the hermetic circularity of its content." J. Derrida, *Positions* (Paris, 1972), pp. 103-104.

6. Heidegger, *Questions I* (Paris, 1968), p. 73. Also, *Was ist Metaphysik* (Frankfurt, 1973), p. 42.

7. J. Derrida, *La Dissemination* (Paris, 1972), p. 11.

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continues to work right within critique and, far from falling into the nothingness of an outmoded past, it ends by compromising the sole present of Hegelian philosophy. The critique thus becomes dissipated in the dogmatism of absolute knowledge. In practice, Hegelian philosophy succumbs to the risk of back-sliding which Derrida sees implicit in every enterprise of de-construction. "Movements of de-construction do not obtain their structures from the outside, they are effective. . . only by occupying those structures and operating necessarily from within, the enterprise of de-constructing being always in a way carried along by its own work"[8] — a fate that characterizes Hegelian philosophy and at the same time renders its approach problematic.

In this context, it is important to focus not so much on the theoretical truth of Hegelian philosophy, but on its practical truth. This approach must turn that text into a weapon against all metaphysics, including the metaphysics that constitutes Hegel's very text as an absolute system of metaphysics. Such a reading cannot proceed thematically: the issues in question do not lend themselves to such a treatment. The practical truth of the Hegelian text, far from being located in what Hegel seems to say, must be sought in what the text *does* rather than says. A truly effective critique of metaphysics requires its reconsideration within a radicalized framework, which is what Marx will try to do. Presupposing the implicit overcoming of Hegel's discourse, Marx wrote that: "The 'phenomenology of mind' is a hidden critique still obscure to itself and mystifying. . . , but we find hidden in it all the elements of critique, and these are already often prepared and elaborated in a manner that far exceeds the Hegelian point of view."[9] Effective critique is so powerful an operation that to understand it we must change our thinking and make a transition from understanding to speculative-dialectical thought.

This transition will be possible only if we approach Hegel differently, no longer seeking the meaning of a text in a set of propositions. The break that Hegelian discourse makes with traditional philosophy emerges as we investigate the strategic polarity of Hegel between understanding and speculative thought. Hegel employs this polarity to disqualify metaphysics by showing it to be a product of the understanding. This mode of thought is characterized by constituting the meaning of reality by fixing it. The new approach to the meaning of "being" had appeared to the young Hegel as inaccessible to any thought still regulated by the understanding. In his youthful project, Hegel found it impossible to deal with the identity of the identical and the non-identical and of the mediation of the mediate and the immediate within the framework of traditional thought. Faced with this, Hegel realized that he had to abandon established forms of reflections. The understanding makes it impossible to avoid abstraction and grasp the concrete.

Having thus recognized the limitations of traditional reflection, Hegel issued this guideline, which is indicative of the originality of his thought: "If reality is inconceivable, then we must forge concepts that are

8. J. Derrida, *De la Grammatologie* (Paris, 1967), p. 39.
9. Karl Marx, *1844 Manuscripts*, Chapter 26.

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inconceivable."[10] If reality is conceivable only through the understanding, which cannot even formulate the idea in its universe of abstraction, then it is necessary to forge "inconceivable" concepts, i.e., concepts that transcend reason as understanding. The deployment of these inconceivable concepts is the undertaking of the speculative process as a radical transformation. This way of philosophizing cannot be reduced to a mere shift within metaphysics. On the contrary, speculative thought has the radical consequence of abolishing metaphysics once and for all. The substitution of the "science of logic" for philosophical discourse is not the introduction of a new philosophy or of a renovated logic, but it is a radical revolution of theory. Hegel, in short, is not Kant.

Speculative discourse thus consists in the radical critique of philosophical reason: critique seeks to show that philosophical reasoning is not a form of reasoning but of understanding, which submits without a struggle to intuition and representation. For Hegel, the submission of thinking to intuition and representation defines thought as understanding against which dialectical reason has to subvert by abolishing all of pre-Hegelian philosophy. The *Science of Logic* is the exemplification of this new type of discourse. Hegel thus writes in the *Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences:* "Speculative philosophy is at the opposite extreme from abstraction, it is precisely the fight against the abstract, the incessant war waged on the reflection of understanding." The implications of this opposition must be properly understood. In its violent opposition to understanding, speculative thought leads to the elimination of abstractions and to a grasping of the concrete. In this process, however, the object of thought undergoes a decisive change upon which hinges the real meaning of Hegel's critique of the understanding.

Thus, when in the "Preface" to the second edition of the Encyclopedia, Hegel criticizes the understanding as constrained by the reductive limits of "either, or,"[11] and by the bad infinity of this simple alternative that can only develop the one-sidedness of its fixed, rigid determinations, he is not referring to the same content that would have to be reappropriated by means of speculative thought. The Hegelian concrete is something that cannot be attained through the understanding because it does not, and cannot, have the vaguest idea of it. Hegel stresses this point in the preface of *The Phenomenology of Mind* when he remarks: "Understanding preserves for itself the necessity and the concept of the content, which comprises the concrete, the effective reality and the living movement of the thing it surveys, or rather it does not keep that to itself, but *it does not know it,* for *if it had this capacity of penetrating into the thing,* it would surely show it. It does not feel a need for all this, otherwise it would renounce its schematization, or at least not be satisfied with a knowledge that does not go beyond an indication of the content, for understanding merely indicates the content, it does not

10. Quoted in Papaioannou, "Hegel," in *Philosophes de tous les Temps* (Paris, 1962). Cf. also in Hyppolite, *Introduction à la Philosophie de l'Histoire de Hegel* (Paris, 1968), p. 51.
11. Hegel, "Preface" to the 2nd edition of the *Encyclopedia* (Frankfurt, 1966), p. 29.

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furnish the content itself." [12]

The content of speculative thought and of understanding belong to different universes of meaning and will always remain incommensurable. Therefore, the critique of the understanding is not a critique of the same object in the name of higher knowledge. It cannot be modelled on the pattern of scientific knowledge, where a first approximation of reality is corrected by subsequent better apprehension of the same object. On the contrary, it means the disqualification of the very object of the understanding; the destruction of its perspective in which the totality of objects that previously comprised the theme of metaphysics is reduced to a pseudo-reality to be denounced.

The implications of this critique of the understanding and of metaphysics far surpass the conventional interpretation of the dialectic in terms of method, i.e., the critique of the methodological inadequacy of apprehending objects.[13] It invalidates the meaning previously recognized in the object, as well as previous determinations of the meaning of being. In other words, what the speculative process criticizes as abstraction is the understanding's ontological determination and fixation of being. Understanding and speculation are incommensurable. Between the objects of understanding and the content of speculative concepts, there is a world of difference. For the understanding, the object is a finite entity, something fixed once and for all in its determinations,[14] while for speculation, the efficacy of the real (*Wirklichkeit*), this movement of mediation, which Hegel calls the life of the content, cannot be reduced to the understanding's object of knowledge.

Furthermore, this denunciation of the pseudo-reason of the understanding is not merely a regional critique. It is a total critique of theory — that *realm of thought* which was the *topos* of ancient logic. Hegelian logic can no longer — as was so often done in the history of Hegel interpretations — be contrasted to the traditional logic in the simplicity of their apparent difference. The transition from one to the other is not just logical in nature. The "science of logic" is not the revision of the old formal logic into a more concrete logic. On the contrary, it is the destruction of the condition for the theoretical possibility of metaphysical discourse. And this subversive destruction corresponds to the establishment of a new rationality, which cannot be compared with the one it destroys.

Hegel's criticisms of judgment, the predicative form, formal logic, and fixations of the understanding are related to this transition to a different order of thought. If nothing else, this makes it impossible to consider Hegel a mere continuation of previous philosophies. As Lebrun emphasized, the speculative realm of the dialectic is already a different realm of thought where the ontological preoccupations of metaphysics collapse along with

12. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, "Preface," p. 52.

13. See Engels' thematization in *Anti-Dühring* of the relation between metaphysical thinking and dialectical thinking, in which dialectical thinking intervenes according to the same viewpoint as understanding where the latter, because of its internal limitations, can advance no further.

14. Hegel, *Encyclopedie des Sciences Philosophiques en Abrege,* trans. Gandillac (Paris, 1970), Sect. 80, p. 140.

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thought as understanding. Thus, the speculative development is no longer based on metaphysics and does not propose a new ontology.[15]

The destruction of ontology takes place through the work of the Hegelian text: its practical truth. Hegel distinguished his speculative dialectic from every past dialectic and claimed that it alone could stand the test of contradiction without being destroyed. This dialectical thinking has nothing in common with the external procedure that Plato employed to annihilate his opponents' arguments.[16] Prior to Kant, the dialectic had been considered an external process, never worthy as an object of real reflection. Against this tradition, Kant had vindicated the dialectic's importance for reason. But Kant's attempt was doomed to failure, since he sided with the understanding seeking to dictate its law to reason. While he recognized the importance of the dialectic and refused to dismiss it, Kant's approach prevented him from appreciating its real nature.

The dialectic began to be significant only with Hegel's introduction of the speculative viewpoint: "The dialectic," he wrote in the *Science of Logic*, "as we understand it here constitutes the speculative."[17] The power of the dialectic is the power of negation, "which nothing, however sure and firm it might be, has the power to resist."[18] The Hegelian dialectic must be distinguished from the bad play of concepts like the Sophistic dialectics, which, once its illusion had been abolished, allowed the content to reappear in unaltered form. Hegel's dialectic, on the contrary, is the effective destruction of this content. From the speculative viewpoint, the Sophists' dialectic shares with what it purports to criticize the fact of resting on presuppositions that always remain unfounded.[19]

Dialectical thinking does not tolerate the presumed validity of any state of affairs and refuses to accept any particular viewpoint as a presupposition. It is, strictly speaking, the abrogation of all presuppositions. As critique, this abrogation of presuppositions also achieves the Hegelian absolute knowledge. If there is in Hegel any enclosure within the figure of absolute knowledge, it is the *enclosing of the previously dominant illusions of metaphysics* — an enclosure which, far from disqualifying questions, actually seeks to open them. In absolute knowledge, Hegel confronts the essence of metaphysics — an essence which remains inaccessible to metaphysics — and, in so doing, abolishes it.

Hegelian absolute knowledge is thus not the simple knowledge of

15. Cf. Lebrun, *La Patience du Concept* (Paris, 1972), p. 409.
16. Hegel, *Science de la Logique*, trans. Labarriere (Paris, 1972), Vol. I, pp. 27-28.
17. Hegel, *Science de la Logique*, trans. S. Jankelevitch (Paris, 1971), Vol. I, p. 43.
18. Hegel, *Encyclopedie des Sciences Philosophiques*, trans. Bourgeois (Paris, 1970), Sect. 81, p. 515.
19. Hegel, *Science de la Logique, op.cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 99. This essential difference between the Sophistic and the speculative dialectic allowed Hegel to identify the former with the system of representation and with thinking as understanding. In a letter to Duboc (April 29, 1823), he wrote: "Representation is knowledge charged with a postulate. Representation belongs to a different realm than that of knowledge of the absolute." Cf. Hegel, *Correspondance* (Paris, 1971), Vol. III, p. 17.

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everything. Nor is it the totality of particular forms of knowledge. Indeed, Hegel thinks that what previously had fallen short of all reflection was precisely the common presuppositions of all knowledge based on an uncritically accepted field of thought.

This absolute position with respect to the unthought presuppositions of metaphysics provides Hegelian philosophy with its real critical power. Knowing the basis of all knowledge, Hegel claims to be no longer dependent on this basis. Aware of what had hitherto silently determined thought, he can establish the distance necessary to abolish this system of constraints. Absolute knowledge, in sum, is achieved by challenging the presuppositions of philosophy and metaphysics and thereby unmasking their lack of foundation. Hegel attacks the seemingly safest anchor of all metaphysics and representative thought: its presupposed foundation which had always remained beyond question. As Heidegger asked: "What is the relation of metaphysics to being? Does metaphysics think being? Never.... Being is not questioned as such."[20]

It is paradoxical that metaphysics, as the quest for foundations, cannot inquire into its own foundations and can only naively assume them. Hegel exploded this situation by posing the question of foundation to metaphysics itself. This process of destruction is introduced in the first chapter of the *Science of Logic*, which opens with a question, "With what must a science begin?" The question has no function other than to lead to the abolition of the fundamental presupposition supporting philosophy's central question. All reflection concerning the beginning serves to disqualify unfounded presuppositions. This, in turn, leads to the question of being, which for Hegel consists in the radical questioning of its presupposition. The first chapter on being, which Lukacs saw as containing "all of Hegel's philosophy,"[21] in effect begins the speculative process. In thinking what hitherto had never been thought, Hegel unveiled the lack of foundation of all metaphysical discourse. This first equation opens the way to all speculative discourse: (pure) being equals (pure) nothingness.

The suppressed idea that being is as little as nothingness is reappropriated by speculative thinking and played off against metaphysics and ontology. By reactivating this idea, Hegel undertakes the destruction of ontology. With the introduction of this contradiction, all landmarks that organize ontological space are removed. Without the suppression of this contradiction, ontology could not be articulated. For metaphysics and ontology only the absolute opposition of being and nothingness is possible: only the double exclusive equality *being equals being* and *nothingness equals nothingness* is rational. That is an absolute truth which could not be rationally questioned. Indeed, it is the absolute condition for the possibility of all rational and meaningful discourse. This radical rejection both of nothingness and of contradiction, however, is not the result of a reflected decision, but of an instinctive reflex,

20. Heidegger, *Nietzsche* (Paris, 1976), Vol. II, p. 277.
21. G. Lukacs, *Histoire et Conscience de Classe* (Paris, 1960), p. 212.

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without which reflection could not exist. The recognition of the contradiction *being equals nothingness* eliminates the foundation of ontology.

Through this logico-epistemological checkmating of ontology, Hegel deprives thought as understanding of its founding principle and blocks all further metaphysics. With the transition from being to nothingness and from nothingness to being, the understanding can no longer function. It is confronted with an unknown universe that offers no fixed point where it can ground its judgment. Now, everything is in transition. At every moment when the understanding believes it can come to rest, the ground vanishes beneath its feet, and the movement has already passed on to something else. Before the work of the concept that dissolves fixed and rigid determinations, before this setting in motion of the immovable and of all that previously seemed stable and solid, the understanding is defeated.

Liberated from the captivity of the understanding, being is recast by Hegel in the incessant movement of transition to its opposite and constantly changed into its own contradiction. Henceforth, it can appear according to the truth of its essential instability. This instability, however, must not be mistaken for the reflection of a dynamic ontology. The Hegelian destruction of ontology precludes such a possibility. The destabilization of being cannot be interpreted as if Hegel simply challenged one quality of being, its immobility, in order to affirm another: mobility. The instability of being does not mean simply mobility. The argument is of an entirely different order. The violence of the Hegelian encounter with the fixedness of the existent is not limited to a mere reformulation of the definition of being. Rather, it shatters being as such. This state of affairs does not astonish speculative thought. On the contrary, this situation is seen as the destiny of all claims to constitute a firm ground. Hegel describes this in the logic of the essence, where he shows how the very idea of foundation contradicts and abolishes itself. [22]

By exposing the inconsistency of the constitutive principle of ontology, Hegel dissolves all the support structures of metaphysics and refutes all its objects, which were granted ontological dignity. He introduces a new meaning of being which is the idea of becoming. Hegel tells us that becoming is the first category specific to the speculative logical process in that it leaves behind the old categories of metaphysics. Being and nothingness thus appear in speculative language only as obsolete categories and the speculative process proper begins only with the category of becoming. As first concrete thought, becoming must be understood according to its truly speculative meaning. The Hegelian critical operation is not summed up in the mere displacement of being into becoming. If so, it would be just a ruse of ontology — a mere broadening of the field of metaphysics to include movement. Taken abstractly, i.e., in isolation from the conceptual movement in which it assumes meaning and function, becoming does not rule out the possibility of creating a new ontology of becoming.

Hegel abandoned the ground of *ousia* (being) and did not mean to save a

22. Hegel, *Science de la Logique, op.cit.*, Vol. III, p. 115.

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place for movement and becoming in the realm of substance. On the contrary, he argued that no dynamization of substance could correspond to a truly dialectical thinking. The thinking of substance stems from finiteness and Hegel has destroyed its medium of thought. When Hegel makes a subject of substance, he does not proceed to set the substance in motion but, rather, to radically disqualify the field of rationality where the concept of substance had found its home. To set in motion what had hitherto been held firm by metaphysics, far from breaking with metaphysics, would prolong and develop it. The metaphysical representation of the world would not be shattered: things would remain unchanged in the state of *in-itself*, with movement merely enveloping them. Far from reaching speculative thought, this procedure would lead back to metaphysics under the illusion of having left it.

This illusion is rooted in the total misconception of the stance which speculative discourse retains with regard to the old metaphysics. The real issue between speculative and metaphysical thought is not found in the mere opposition of the static and the dynamic. The dialectic is not a thinking of movement which would be opposed to a metaphysics incapable of incorporating the reality of motion. To understand Hegel's new viewpoint on substance as a renewal of Spinoza's by setting it in motion is the result of a fundamental misunderstanding. Substance in the field of speculative thought is a forbidden concept that was abolished along with ontology, whence it derived its meaning. The substance Hegel speaks of in the "Preface" to *The Phenomenology of Mind* cannot be compared with its ontological homonym.[23] The equation of substance with the Hegelian subject gives substance an unprecedented meaning. To attempt to reinterpret the Hegelian category in terms of its ancient application in pre-Hegelian philosophy, as, for example, Lukacs does, leads to re-ontologizing all of Hegelian philosophy, against which Hegel's entire text is deployed.[24] The substances as subject idea radically transforms the meaning of *the objectivity of the real*, and develops a new theory of efficacy within the space opened by the destruction of the rational base of the idea of substance. Mediation obtains between the immediate and the mediate and recognizes everything as an effect of the process of mediation, i.e., it discovers in all reality its character as *result*. Each determination is the result of an entire process through which it has been posited as a simple movement that cannot be fixed in an in-itself, as understanding typically does.[25]

In movement, the concept, what understanding had arrested in the stability of a pseudo-substance, rediscovers its true momentariness: "Nothing

23. Hegel, *La Phenomenologie de l'Esprit*, trans. Hyppolite, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, p. 17.

24. Lukacs is a prime example of this error. He was one of the Marxists who best understood the decisive importance of Hegel with regard to Marx, and yet he failed to recognize in Hegel the real critical import of the dialectic. Lukacs thus sees Hegelian philosophy as a *new ontology*. He understands the operation of the absorption of ontology into logic as a positive operation of promoting ontology, by which ontology becomes dynamic and gives the ancient concept of substance its true rationality. Cf. Lukacs, *On the Ontology of Social Being* (Neuwied and Berlin, 1971), pp. 73, 79, 83.

25. Hegel, *Science de la Logique, op.cit.*, Vol. I, p. 120.

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can resist the concept; it is the absolute without predicate, for it absolutely *everything is a moment.*"[26] This character of momentariness thus shows that the totality of determinations presupposed to be in-themselves are in fact terms posited by the practical process of mediation.

In the transition to substance as subject there is a decisive rupture that leads to a universe of totally revolutionized meaning. This universe is what Hegel had in mind when, in Jena, faced with the resistance of the concrete to let itself be thought, he called for "inconceivable concepts." Thus, Hegel introduced a new theoretical sensitivity and a new attitude that discovers reality under a previously unperceived truth. By positing the pre-eminence of process over the terms it engenders, by necessitating a consideration of each determination as simply a moment of the process that constitutes it, Hegel defines a new meaning of the real. The new meaning of being rules out the possibility of positing the real as the *in-itself.*

Henceforth, the in-itself is returned to its truth, i.e., its being an illusion of representative thought. In contraposition to this, Hegel introduces his new determination of the meaning of being: substance conceived as subject. This new determination is nothing but the affirmation of the absolute process of mediation. This process is at work in the dialectic of being and nothingness behind whose apparent abstraction something eminently concrete is taking place: the new comprehension of reality and its apprehension. In the movement of being and nothingness, the very conditions of all possible objectivity are enunciated and, with them, the structure of the efficacy of reality (*Wirklichkeit*).

This analysis began with the intent of locating those elements in Hegel upon which Marx based his own theory and to reconsider their relation. These elements have been located in Hegel's critical intervention against all metaphysics. This is the Hegelian inheritance in Marx's thinking. It opens the way for a different meaning of being that restores the concrete content to the real which metaphysics had confiscated from it in its process of systematic reification. It thus unfolds the practical dimension of reality resulting from the process of mediation, i.e., the process that allows the real to be recognized as a product.

To return to the question of the link between the project of critique and the revolutionary password — a link that systematically defines the terrain of critical thought: What relation is there between the critical dimension opened by Hegel and its place within Marxism? The radical transformation of reality envisioned by the revolutionary password presupposes that a radical transformation must have become conceivable. This is what Hegel bequeathed to Marx's thought, by showing that reality is always the product of a transformation and thus itself essentially transformable — an idea that metaphysics had essentially ruled out.

26. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie* (Frankfurt, 1970), p. 406.

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NOTES AND COMMENTARY:

THE THREE FACES OF THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

by Lucio Colletti*

With Togliatti alive, the Italian Communist Party's policy from 1947 to 1956 was essentially clear. Its primary objective was the defense and consolidation of "bourgeois democracy" against reaction or a return to fascism. A second phase, the passage to socialism, had been deferred to a subsequent period contingent on the internal power relation and, even more, on international developments (the Cold War, etc.). This was a strategy more or less based on the Seventh Congress of the Comintern (1935). It was primarily a policy of "popular fronts" and of broad alliances in defense of "bourgeois-democratic" institutions. If the situation became more favorable, there would likely be a shift to the second phase: the passage to socialism.

Firmly anchored with the Soviet Union, the foundations of this policy appeared set and beyond question. The possibilities for maneuvering that it allowed were practically unlimited. Togliatti could implement abrupt turns to the "right" without anyone, especially in the party, really misunderstanding him. At any rate, most of these moves were meant to broaden the Italian Communist Party's space within the framework of bourgeois-democratic institutions. The nature of the second phase and how socialism was to be understood remained beyond all doubt. Socialism meant the Soviet Union. Socialism would one day mean, in economics, centralized planning and the nationalization of almost all the fundamental means of production; and in politics, the rule of the "party of the working class," i.e., the PCI, maybe even in more or less fictitious and convenient alliance with other parties, as had already happened in some "popular democracies."

Of course, the Soviet model did not rule out "national variations." It was thought, for example, that under particularly favorable circumstances the Italian Constitution might even have permitted a "peaceful road" to socialism. It was emphasized, in any case, that in Italy the "socialist transformation" would have been — conditions permitting — the most "gradual" and painless possible; that it would have been made carefully and with particular attention to the so-called Vatican question, and generally predisposed not to force things — even on matters concerning state control over the entire economy. Still, the nature of the model toward which Italy would gradually advance, as well as what one understood by socialism, remained absolutely clear and beyond discussion.

This strategic conception lasted until 1956. It was dealt a fatal blow by Krushchev's secret speech and the Hungarian insurrection, followed by the crisis in Sino-Soviet relations, the Czech invasion, the workers' uprisings in Poland, Soviet dissent, the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and the Chinese attack on Vietnam. These events gradually brought about the ruin of the Soviet model. Not only did the PCI reject the conception of Russia as the "guiding state," but it slowly and laboriously succeeded in establishing two basic tenets of its "new" strategy.

The first, the recognition of parliamentary democracy and of the plurality of parties, was initially introduced as if it had been a return and continuation of Togliatti's line during the Seventh World Congress and the Spanish Civil War. In reality, it was

*Originally published in *L'Espresso*, Nov. 25, 1979, pp. 13-17. Translated by Frank Adler.

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something radically new. The Seventh World Congress of the Comintern did advocate the defense of bourgeois democracy against fascism, it is true, but at the same time it also reiterated that it was "bourgeois" democracy. As Dimitrov put it, it was "the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie in the form of bourgeois democracy." Of course, it was preferable to fascist terror, yet it remained a class dictatorship. Berlinguer's position, as well as that of the new leadership, is radically different on this point. It marks a clamorous break with the entire tradition. For today's PCI, political and civil liberties are no longer "bourgeois:" they are indispensable at all times — even after the transition to socialism. Without them socialist democracy is inconceivable.

The second departure of the new strategy is even more explosive than the first and concerns the economy. To illustrate it, let me cite a passage from Giorgio Napolitano's "Introduction" to his recent book, *In Mezzo al Guado* (In Midstream). The passage is completely in keeping with official positions. It says that, in reflecting on "the experience of constructing socialism in the USSR and in other countries," the Italian Communist Party has come to deny "that the economy's nationalization and centralized planning represents an applicable or even desirable model for an industrialized Western nation." Instead, Napolitano says, the PCI "investigated the role of the market regarding a socialist transformation which does not have as its goal the integral socialization of the means of production."

Anyone familiar with the ABC's of Marxism can easily realize the implications of these two points. The first liquidates the "class" conception of the state, claiming that democratic institutions, which have served the bourgeoisie, can also serve socialism. In short, it claims that institutions are above classes. The second point dismisses with one stroke all three volumes of *Das Kapital*. For Marx, "commodities," i.e., the products destined to be exchanged on the market, are the cells that embody all of capitalist alienation and exploitation. Clearly, the new strategy radically challenges the traditional idea of socialism.

Many political observers of the ideological evolution of the PCI have thus presumed that this state of affairs was a prelude to a change similar to the one undertaken by the German Social Democratic Party in Bad Godesberg when it simply eliminated Marxism from its theoretical baggage. In fact, to support the survival of the market and to defend existing political institutions is to abandon the two areas once considered fundamental to "socialist transformation." What remains is only some space for reform within the system, but the system itself is not touched. Much remains to be done as a reformist party, but there is no longer room for a revolutionary party.

One wing of the PCI has reached precisely these conclusions. It has accepted little or nothing of the new strategy. It has naturally accepted the collapse of the Soviet myth. But, sniffing the reformist course of the new line, it has sought a different path of renewal. What could that be? Discarding the bureaucratic dictatorship of a single party, this wing of the PCI (Ingrao, Trentin and others) could only seek to elaborate the 1968 experience. Its ingredients are well known: cultural revolution, democracy of spontaneous movements, factory councils, egalitarianism, rejection of party bureaucratism, support for the most audacious theses of emancipatory and revolutionary syndicalism, critique of the "alienation" of industrial labor, and the utopia of a "new organization" of production.

While the revisionist line was primarily concerned with upholding the vacillating institutions of republican democracy from 1969 onward, this wing, which had slowly been absorbing a large part of the utopianism of 1968, moved in the opposite direction: to prevent at all costs the recomposition of the so-called "contradictions," Italy had to become the "laboratory of transition." The first of these two lines, championed by

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Lama, sought a radical turn in trade-union politics. It exerted pressure on the party to enter the governing majority — even without being part of the Cabinet. The second, instead, sought to sabotage this change of course in the trade-unions and thus return to the party to the opposition.

Amendola's recent position emerges from this context. He understands that republican democracy in Italy is doomed if inflation increases, conflicts at the work place continue, the workers' cost of living scale is not modified and if the raising of indiscriminate demands is not stopped. The party's effort over so many years to develop a new line would thus go down the drain. The PCI might risk being pushed back even beyond the Seventh World Congress, which at least fought to maintain and support bourgeois democracy.

The second line, that of Ingrao and the left syndicalists, moves in the opposite direction. It wants to direct the crisis of the system and push it to its extreme conclusions. This wing also no longer has a precise idea of what it means by socialism. It is also caught in communism's general identity crisis, which it tries to overcome by means of a confused set of ideas, or rather vague intentions outlined by Ingrao in an illuminating book-interview dealing with the "third way."

It remains now to say something of Berlinguer, and in particular of the center (the place of conciliation, as Lenin called it): the nerve center of all party apparatuses — especially communist parties. Berlinguer's position is difficult. Togliatti could pull off a turn to the right as much as he wanted: he had behind him Stalin's Russia with all its myths still intact. Berlinguer, instead, today administers an orphan party. He is at the head of a troublesome church. The church of Wojtyla pays in the afterlife with invisible currency. The Communist church, on the other hand, must pay here and in cash.

Thus, it is clear why what Amendola requests must appear to the party leadership as the most difficult thing to explain to the masses (especially after the illusions fed to them for so many years). It is no accident that the central argument of Berlinguer's answer has been this: one cannot ask the masses to pull in their belts without promising them, at the same time, something that will help to "depart from capitalism," to "overcome the system," to launch the construction of a "new society," etc. Except that, while Amendola's line, as thankless as it is, is still a policy (as is the case, in its own way, with Ingrao's line), Berlinger's line is not. The "center" today consists of the administration of a living contradiction, attempting to mediate between Amendola and Ingrao. But in this case the mediation produces only ambiguity.

Berlinguer's rejection of centralized planning and his commitment to safeguard the market does allow a program but only in the social-democratic direction. It does not bring about any of those other things which Berlinguer has in mind. In an Aug. 4, 1979, article in *Rinascita* and then in his Adriano speech, he has clarified the issue. Allegedly, it is a matter of doing nothing less than smashing the capitalist mechanism — which, he says, "by its nature knows only the compatability and quantitative relations between abstract indexes" — in order to "place at its center a problem of values, of ends, of the objectives of accumulation, of an innovative intervention in the property order to materially push the economic structure toward these objectives." In Marxist language these obscure statements signify that he intends to reorganize production not toward "exchange value" but toward "use value." This is precisely Ingrao's economics!

Now, apart from the fact that all this, if it is intended to be something different from Soviet planning, has no real meaning, it is easy to understand in what sense Berlinguer wants the impossible. He seeks to safeguard the market economy and, at the same time, wants to place at its center "use value" rather than "exchange value." This is an impossible undertaking. An economy ordered toward the production of use value is an

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economy that has abolished (or reduced to nothing) the market. Vice versa, an economy that seeks to retain the market furnishes use value only by realizing it first as exchange value.

Of course, these discussions of use value and exchange value are futile. It is not by manipulating instruments like these that one can intervene in a modern economy. Yet, still, this is a significant aspect of the Italian drama — that, while the nation slides toward disaster, the Communist Party's leadership evades making decisive choices in favor of this scholasticism.

GERMAN NOTES

by Russell Berman

During the 1960s, New Left common sense eagerly cast West Germany in the role of the free world's beachhead against communism. This identification coupled with that linking West Germany to the Nazi era was certainly an emotional propaganda coup within the growing student movement. Yet images of that sort hardly deepen the analysis of historical complexities. On the contrary, certain questions could no longer be raised once the roles were assigned. Since the Left in the Federal Republic defined its enemy — the state with its capital in Bonn — as an anti-Soviet outpost, no serious widespread critique of Eastern European societies was developed. Thus, when Rudi Dutschke, the former star of the student movement, aligned himself with Russian dissidents — a move that would hardly have appeared unusual in Paris or Rome — he was nearly ostracized by his West German companions. Recently, a wider spectrum on the Left has spoken out against the Eastern European version of socialism, but characteristically, only in the cases of avowedly socialist dissidents. The West German allies of Wolf Biermann and Rudolf Bahro still see themselves ultimately as opponents of anti-communism and consequently choose their dissidents with fastidious discrimination.

At the same time, the image of a Germany tightly linked to a fascist past and integrated into the western capitalist world system permitted the Left to pose in a heroic anti-fascist light and in fact to appropriate all the romantic glamour of the German workers movement of the 1920s. Yet this attractive self-image was clearly a misunderstanding: the motivating thinking in the mid-1960s was initially less related to the historical tradition of Marxism than to an actionistic existentialism. The actual opponent was the tyranny of Adenauer's conservative 1950s, not the anarchy of the market place, and the shining lights of the protest generation were the same culture heroes applauded between London and Berkeley, replaced only later — and only superficially — by Brecht, Eisler, *et al.*

In the 1970s, a new interpretive pattern arose. An identity derived from Germany's alleged front-line role in the East-West conflict was insufficient in the age of detente. Nor was the image of an anti-communist Federal Republic convincing in the light of the Social Democrats' *Ostpolitik*. The Left redefined West Germany as the bastion of capitalist stability against the emancipatory thrusts of Eurocommunism in Italy, France

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and Portugal. Evidence did not seem hard to find. Bonn could throw its economic weight around in order to influence political developments in Southern Europe, and its anti-terrorist police network stretched across international borders to the shores of the Black Sea. Similarly, in the Kappler affair of the summer of 1977, the government refused to consider extradition or prosecution when right-wing German agents freed a Nazi war criminal still held in Italy and brought him into the Federal Republic. In fact, however, these developments are linked to many heterogeneous factors: the new status of Western European nations *vis-à-vis* the United States, international realignments, the domestic political repercussions of terrorism, the opaque attitudes of West Germans toward war criminals and the historical legacy of fascism, as well as the complicated legal apparatus designed to handle — or avoid handling — such problems. While the West German Left of the 1970s continued to ignore many of these complexities, its re-evaluation of the European situation and the role of the Federal Republic contributed to the development of a new antinomy that would focus attention on questions previously excluded from political discussion.

The anti-authoritarian phase of the West German student movement, marked by a volatile mixture of characteristically New Left anarchism, Frankfurt School Marxism and an instinctive radicalism eager to engage in "practice," ended in 1969-70 with the so-called "proletarian-revolutionary turn." An orthodox Marxism-Leninism emphasizing discipline and organization rejected both the perspective of critical theory as well as the possibility of reform by the new Social Democratic government — a possibility that had been a key factor of political life in the 1960s. Yet the theoretical desiccation associated with the Marxist-Leninist phase was in fact only a superficial phenomenon limited to the Left's own superstructure. While the movement's theoreticians busied themselves with the exhumation of a thoroughly objectivist tradition, everyday life in the leftist subculture carried on the habits of the anti-authoritarian phase and communes, sexual experimentation, various forms of youth culture and individual anti-careerist decisions made a curious background for the most serious academic Marxism.

This odd combination of Bohemian subculture and orthodox theory began to collapse in the mid-1970s under the pressure of international and domestic developments. The appearance of Eurocommunism changed the theoretical landscape by presenting an apparent alternative to both Soviet Marxism and the Social Democratic welfare state. Thus, the privileged status of Leninism as the ultimate revolutionary theory was undermined. More important, however, was the new character ascribed to West German society itself. It was no longer the anti-Soviet bastion that the Left had traditionally discerned. On the contrary, the central antinomy shifted from capitalism-communism (henceforth the position of East German apologists) to the antagonism between the bureaucratic state and popular autonomy. This transition from anti-capitalism to anti-statism was accelerated by political processes in Southern Europe, and it was nurtured by changes within the German Left itself. First of all, it had not taken long for the Marxism of the early 1970s to discredit itself, since it was diametrically opposed to the character of everyday life in the leftist subculture. Furthermore, the Left proved incapable of responding even on a purely theoretical level to three new developments. Given orthodox Marxism's explicit commitment to the development of the productive forces of society, any opposition to nuclear power was necessarily limited to rejection of the capitalist abuse of the new technology and coupled with a sectarian characterization of the growing number of anti-nuclear activists as neo-Luddites. Orthodox Marxism could also find no adequate response to the burgeoning feminist movement of the mid-1970s. Polemics against a "bourgeois

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women's movement" could not impede the increasing attention devoted to subjectivity, personal experience as a political sphere and questions of patriarchy and power relationships. Finally, the politics of the "proletarian-revolutionary turn" again proved fully inadequate to a third issue, civil liberties. The wave of political repression that has come to be associated the term "Berufsverbot" had a devastating effect on the credibility of West German Marxism, which extended far beyond its obvious influence on the careers of those individuals whose ideological commitments were subjected to the scrutiny of the constitutional police. On the one hand, the legitimacy of the Soviet model was further undermined; while the Russell Tribunal investigated abuses of civil rights in the Federal Republic, the potential outcome of a similar investigation of East German practices was an open secret which the Maoists did not fail to point out. On the other hand, the erstwhile critics of bourgeois freedoms in West Germany were now forced in self-defense into the role of pious civil libertarians. This major theoretical reversal could not be hidden by the appropriate quotations from Marxist classics. When push came to shove, proletarian revolutionism collapsed and gave way to an apparently liberal opposition to the expanding state.

The shift of the West German discussion to a critique of the bureaucratic repressive state converged with issues raised in France by Foucault and in the current reception of critical theory in the United States. Nothing could be more inappropriate than to explain contemporary developments in the Federal Republic on the basis of a specifically German heritage. For example, the model of the state that Lohmann describes in his polemic is equally applicable to the rest of Western Europe or North America. Explanations of repression in West Germany that emphasize an alleged continuity with the fascist past (by pointing out the past of important figures, the inadequate prosecution of war criminals or the increased activity on the right-wing fringe) are intended either to obscure similarly repressive developments outside of Germany or to provide a basis for East Germany's self-appointed status as the anti-fascist antipode of a reactionary Bonn. An alternative and somewhat superior form of the argument that underscores a specifically German heritage focuses on the general bureaucratic legacy instead of merely on the history of fascism. Thus *Berufsverbot* is regarded simply as the current manifestation of deeply entrenched patterns of governmental administration formed nearly two centuries ago with the establishment of the German civil service. Again, however, the excessive emphasis placed on a specifically German situation is belied by the status of civil liberties elsewhere in Western Europe. Furthermore, appeals to the bureaucratic tradition fail to explain the new character of the repressive state in the last quarter of the 20th century.

The uniquely West German nature of the discussion in the following essays lies in the reference to certain key events. A critique of the expansionist state had accompanied the opposition to *Berufsverbot,* but it did not come into its own until the fall of 1977, the so-called "German Fall." The kidnapping and murder of Hanns-Martin Schleyer, head of the Industrialists' Organization, the hijacking of a Lufthansa plane and the deaths of imprisoned terrorists (which in turn spawned rumors of official responsibility for "staged" suicides) created a highly charged atmosphere in which politicians and the press pushed the anti-terrorism campaign to the center of public consciousness, while laws that endangered civil liberties were whipped through the Parliament. The ideology of *Berufsverbot* had posited the imaginary opponent as the "enemy of the constitution," but after the German Fall, the new enemy became the "sympathizer." This term could easily refer to much more than the terrorists' infrastructure for logistic support: anyone who did not fully support the war against the enemy implicitly sympathized with the

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opponent. Opposition to the growth of police power was thus defamed if not officially incriminated.

At this point the so-called Mescalero essay, to which Lohmann refers, appeared in a student newspaper in Göttingen. Although the anonymous author in fact argued against terror and political violence in general, his form of argumentation set off a political scandal. Beginning in a confessional mode — itself typical of the growing subjectivist trend — he admitted experiencing a "clandestine joy" at the news of the terrorist assassination of the Federal Attorney General Buback. Yet his point was that only a close examination of this apparently widespread emotional response could lead to its condemnation. Thus Mescalero's self-criticism admitted a spontaneous sympathy for the terrorists' actions only in order to decry them; terrorist violence, he argued, could have no positive effect whatsoever on the libertarian transformation of society that he envisioned. Nevertheless, the press emphasized only the "clandestine joy," and the publication of the essay was soon prohibited: hence the legal battles to which Lohmann alludes.

The background to Lohmann's vision of a conflict between state and society is suggested in the discussion among Sartre, Cohn-Bendit and the West German feminist Alice Schwarzer. Any profile of the Federal Republic that restricts itself to a bureaucratic state is incomplete unless it includes the subcultural activity beyond the borders of immediate administration. Cohn-Bendit and Schwarzer describe this activity and its significance in West Germany. Feminism, ecology, and alternative organizations seem to flourish, but they are always on the verge of conflict with the state administration, which increasingly disallows the constitution of independent spheres of social participation.

The problem of expansionist state power is discussed in terms of its relationship to the Holocaust in the conversation with Sartre. The recent widespread attention in West Germany to the Nazi genocide cannot be attributed simply to the television film, the debate on the statute of limitations or the publicity stunts of right-wing fanatics. Nor is it simply a matter of an increasingly powerful Federal Republic's coming to terms with its own past. These factors contributed to the intensity of the discussion, but it is important to look at the precise terms of the debate: guilt and power. Significantly, the question of guilt is not treated in a narrow political or moral sense (although Sartre raised the ethical problem). For Schwarzer and Cohn-Bendit, guilt is above all a matter of emotions and personality structure; the historical re-examination of the Holocaust is thus a moment in the contemporary thematization of subjectivity. Byg pursues the politics of subjectivity and the related failure of the all-too-orthodox Left in his discussion of the reception of the television series *Holocaust* in Germany. He also describes how the emotions of the viewers were managed in order to bolster the legitimacy of the bureaucracy; the critique of power became a mechanism to generate power. It is precisely this paradox that is central to Lanzmann's essay and Zimmer's review of Syberberg's film, *Our Hitler*. Fascism and genocide are thus neither relegated to historicist irrelevance nor restricted to the far right, Nazi milieu. They have become general parameters of the modern administrative state. Syberberg's neo-anarchist aesthetics and his attempt to develop a cinema that can criticize power without contributing to its myth simply by representing it is thus parallel to Lohmann's polemic against the expanding bureaucracy.

The split on the West German Left between Marxism and anarchist tendencies still takes the form of a generation gap: the veterans of the 1960s maintain a theoretical commitment to the socialist classics, while the younger "spontaneist" radicals are often antagonistic to theory in general. Unlike the earlier actionistic rejection of theory in the

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name of practice, however, the new anti-theoretical stance is primarily opposed to any reflection based on the postulate of a social totality. The insistence on a non-subsumable particularity echoes the Frankfurt School, yet in its new form it implies an adamant rejection of the Marxist vision of revolution as a complete transformation of society carried out by a universal agent. Instead, politics now takes place in the social fragment and lacks a secret tie to the nerve center of power. On the one hand, this may imply a necessary break with the Enlightenment tradition of totalizing theory. In this sense Lohmann's sweeping polemic is exceptional, while his references to a specific constellation of events is symptomatic; no theory is to be allowed for theory's sake — a position in danger of undermining itself by denying self-reflection. On the other hand, the generation gap on the Left is itself a phenomenon of contemporary monopoly capitalism. Like the West German state, like the established political parties, the Left too is reeling under a legitimation crisis. Neo-anarchism may simply represent the left-wing version of a widespread disaffection with the welfare bureaucracy and its proponents. In that case, Lohmann's heroic tones and the hopes that Schwarzer and Cohn-Bendit invest in the subculture may prove to be ideological self-deception in the no-man's-land outside the sphere of administrative rationality. Nevertheless, the description of that sphere and its limits remains a central moment in radical social thought in Germany at the beginning of the 1980s.

SOCIETY VERSUS THE STATE

by Hans-Martin Lohmann*

1. During a discussion of terrorism last fall, at the peak of the government's manhunt following the kidnapping of Hanns-Martin Schleyer, my godmother in Wuppertal said to me, "I love this government." I remember this sentence, not only because of its remarkable senselessness, but also because of its aggressive and erotic implications. Is it at all possible to love an abstract and "un-bourgeois" structure like the government? What provokes a person to make such a statement voluntarily? Or are we Germans particularly predestined to love our government because of our long tradition? In 1813, Mikhail Bakunin wrote, "The Germans...are, to the greatest extent possible, a government conscious people, and this awareness of government supercedes all other passions in them, and completely represses in them the instinct for freedom...a real deification of governmental power has developed over the centuries in the hearts of the Germans, a cult which has, by degrees, generated a bureaucratic theory and practice."[1] Is the same true of us today, after Bismarck, after Hindenburg, after Hitler and Adenauer? Do we Germans really love "our" government? And *must* we love it?

2. The Berlin Supreme Court has reproached the editors of the Mescalero text for having "extravagantly" and "disrespectfully" criticized the Federal Republic in their

*Translated by Jamie Daniel.

1. Michail Bakunin, *Staatlichkeit und Anarchie und andere Schriften* (Frankfurt, Berlin, Vienna, 1972), pp. 513, 526.

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preface by "alluding to the fascist dictatorship in Germany." These remarks, the court said, held the "Federal Republic and its provinces 'in contempt.' " The editors' reference to "crypto-fascist tendencies" is allegedly "malicious" and symptomatic of a "hostile sentiment." While the accused admittedly have a right to criticize particular state measures in connection with the publication of the Mescalero article, "this does not include the right to accuse the state of despotism, crypto-fascist tendencies and the suppression of freedom of opinion."

What do such statements by a court mean in a political context? The opinion clearly incriminates any immoderate criticism as well as disrespect for West Germany and its governmental organs. Does this mean that from now on every critic of the government must formulate his criticism moderately and respectfully? Will no one be permitted in the future to speak or to write "contemptuously" about the State? In other words, are we supposed to love the Leviathan?

The court reacted with particular sensitivity to the expression "crypto-fascist tendencies." To suggest the possibility of parallels between the fascism of the 1930s and 1940s and the West German government in the 1970s is evidently tantamount to a "hostile" act. The incredible political premise behind this ruling is apparently the following: The State (in this case the court) claims a monopoly on definition, which in turn allows it to dictate to society what it, the State is, and how one is supposed to behave in regard to it. Therefore, to take an example, if the State should claim on the basis of this monopoly on definition that it is the most permissive and democratic government in all of German history (something our politicians have been stressing with suspicious emphasis), then this self-generated statement would be binding for society as a whole. Whoever might doubt this claim could be accused of exhibiting hostility (or would it already be considered an act?) against the state.

According to this logic, the state and only the state has the right to determine what the state is. The absolute — indeed, absolutist — structure of this definition is striking: the definer (the state) and that which is being defined (the state) are one and the same. As sovereign as a god-like monarch, the state determines its own essence and forces all that which is not the state to submit to it. The traditional relationship of society and government as it developed historically — and here it would be useful to keep in mind the fact that governmentless, acephalous societies have always existed and continue to do so[2] — has been turned upside down. Instead of society, which made the existence of the state possible in the first place, defining just what the state is and is not, the state itself has taken over this role. The state, certainly in need of a definition, secures for itself all appropriate stipulations with the help of the self-glorifying claim that it alone is qualified to determine such stipulations.

3. The self-glorification of the state is evident not only in its pretentious self-definition, but also in a parallel development, its active attempts to limit the scope of social life. A remarkable example of this tendency can be seen in the argument the federal ministry recently used to reverse its own earlier decision to deny an entry permit to Ernst Mandel: "As grounds for the reversal of the ban on the entry permit, the ministry cites the political meaninglessness within the Federal Republic of Trotskyism, for which Mandel serves as a principal representative and speaker. The ministry is convinced that the internal security of the Federal Republic will no longer be endangered by Mandel's entry."[3]

2. See Christian Sigrist, *Regulierte Anarchie* (Otten and Freiburg, 1967); Fritz Kramer and Christian Sigrist, *Gesellschaften ohne Staat*, Vol. I: *Gleichheit und Gegenseitigkeit* (Frankfurt, 1978); Pierre Clastres, *Staatsfeinde. Studien zur politischen Anthropologie* (Frankfurt, 1976).

3. *Frankfurter Rundschau*, August 25, 1978.

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Whether the evaluation of the political role of Trotskyism by the Federal Republic is accurate is completely immaterial here — it may very well be that Trotskyism is ultimately unimportant. What *is* particularly astounding about this incident is the fact that the state finds it proper to judge the relevance of social (or political) groups in accordance with its own opinions. Apart from the undisguised opportunism of this statement (as if Trotskyism had been more "politically meaningful" four or five years ago than it is today!), the state's claim to autonomy is immediately evident: I, the state, decide whether a social or political movement is of social consequence and whether it is or is not beneficial to "internal security."

One need only separate this autonomous action on the part of the state from the actual "Mandel case" to become aware of the consequences towards which such autonomy leads. Has it ever been considered the duty of the state to act as the ultimate, god-like judge, and to determine the content and limitations of social life? Can it in principle interpret *every* social movement and then make it its business to neutralize or control it? It is obvious how the state could use this power in any social conflict in which it might be involved. For example, when faced with a mass strike with anti-capitalist inclinations, the state could limit the options for action available to the unions by declaring their agitation to be "a danger to the internal security of the Federal Republic." It could easily deprive unions of a basis for legal political activity; the Emergency Powers Act offers the *de facto* foundation for the complete independence of government action.

The complete autonomy of the state implies that the *authenticity of society*, its intrinsic life and right to exist, is fundamentally questionable. Society derives its authenticity second hand, as it were — from the hand of the state.

4. To come back to the initial question: must we love "our" government? As Europeans, as Germans, we know that "a society without government is unthinkable.... Government is the fate of every society.... This is the immediate spontaneous point, which, if not the most widely known, is the most intimately known. For every one of us carries within himself, internalized like the faith of a believer, the certainty that society is for the government."[4] It is this spontaneous certainty on the part of civilized people that allows us to say, "I love my government." For what would society be without government?

For the European who has learned all too well from a long history of state power and oppression that the existence of the state is an absolute necessity, it is of course difficult to abandon the notion that "true societies evolve in the protective shadow of the state."[5] Even Marxism — the product of a dyed-in-the-wool ethnocentrism that it has blindly taken over from the hated bourgeoisie — repeatedly appears as an enthusiastic apologist for the state. In this respect Bakunin, rather than Marx, has been proven correct: the legal autonomy of the state has progressed disproportionately further in relation to its social basis in the "real socialist" countries of Eastern Europe than it has in developing capitalist societies.[6] Some people who call themselves Marxists openly admit that "We Marxists in the socialist countries identify in principle with socialist state supremacy (*Staatlichkeit*)."[7] Socialist state supremacy? Indeed, "Orthodox socialists believe that

4. Clastres, *op.cit.*, p. 179.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 187.

6. See Rudolf Bahro, *Die Alternative. Zur Kritik des real existierenden Sozialismus* (Cologne and Frankfurt, 1977); Lucio Lombardo Radice, "Staatssozialismus" in *Antworten auf Bahros Herausforderung der realen Sozialismus*, ed. Ulf Walter (West Berlin, 1978), pp. 20ff.; György Konrad and Ivan Szelenyi, *Die Intelligenz auf dem Weg zur Klassenmacht* (Frankfurt am Main, 1978).

7. Letter from a friend in East Germany. Compare to the following, written in 1935: "For a

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unregulated society would develop in a non-socialist manner, outside the bounds of theoretical principles."[8] According to its communist master thinkers, society requires a strong state to unremittingly supervise the development of society in accordance with theoretical principles.

One can hardly overlook the fact that the state, regardless of its origins, "has and must have the tendency not only to accomplish the goals of a community, but also to be an end in itself."[9] This tendency towards legal autonomy, recognized by Gustav Landauer as a threat to culture, repeatedly kindles the opposition of society, which perceives the state's proclivity to lead it by the nose as a restrictive measure — "we must unwind the convoluted state, we must cut and divide and be destructive."[10] Society versus the state. The socialization of individuals by the state, i.e., by an authority that is removed from society and which has isolated itself against it, is neither a law of nature nor an anthropological necessity. The state and the agencies it uses to maintain power are historically contingent. And the absence of a state, characteristic of so-called primitive societies, "is not the expression of racial inferiority, or the cognitive inability to conceive of government, but rather is a definite choice, the expression of a collective will, which one could convincingly designate as *protogenic egalitarianism.*"[11]

Oscar Wilde was intuitively very close to the idea of an egalitarian society without government when he wrote, "It is only in voluntary association that man is fine."[12] As an artist, he possessed a genuine perceptive power regarding the defeat which the state has inflicted and continues to inflict upon society by means of its very existence. Perhaps his demand for "no government whatsoever"[13] was naive, but I consider that such naive perception and formulation is very important, as long as we continue to blindly believe in the need for the state to exist. Why should the state's hegemony over society be considered necessary? Why should we love our government?

Moreover, one might speculate that even seemingly orderly and loyal citizens nurse a deep-seated if unconscious hatred of the regulatory and legislative authority of the state. An incident that illustrates this recently appeared in the newspaper under the headline, 'Passers-by reap the spoils": "Tuesday afternoon on Schillerstrasse pedestrians were able to collect some large bank notes, and about half a dozen people unceremoniously took advantage of the opportunity. They owed this financial blessing to a 15-year-old bank robber, who was apprehended by a waiter and turned over to the police shortly after a hold-up at the branch of the Dresdener Bank at 25 Schillerstrasse. In the process [of apprehending him] part of the loot was scattered on the pavement.... Several employees at 30 Schillerstrasse looked on as the money disappeared into the pockets of passers-by. Later, when the money was counted, 2,808 marks were missing. In addition to the waiter, an employee of the Terrassencafé, was 'punished' for his part in the incident — one of the passers-by grabbed his wallet and, despite a chase, successfully escaped."[14] There are evidently more enemies of the state than it could possibly ask for.

Marxist party there is no loyalty to the state." In Franz Neumann, *Wirtschaft, Staat, Demokratie. Aufsätze 1930-1954,* ed. Alfons Söllner (Frankfurt am Main, 1978), p. 143.

8. Stefan Kisielewski, "Ist das schon Sozialismus, oder kommt es noch schlimmer?" *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,* August 29, 1978.

9. Gustav Landauer, *Erkenntnis und Befreiung. Ausgewählte Reden und Aufsätze* (Frankfurt am Main, 1976), p. 39.

10. *Ibid.,* p. 34.

11. Kramer and Sigrist, *op.cit.,* p. 32.

12. Oscar Wilde, "The Soul of Man under Socialism," in *Complete Writings,* Vol. 7 (New York, 1909).

13. *Ibid.,* p. 294.

14. *Frankfurter Rundschau,* Sept. 6, 1978.

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Persons officially considered enemies of the state are not the only ones who like to get their hands into other people's pockets.

5. Marx and Engels argued that the "withering away of the State," its withdrawal *into* and *through* society, was a crucial step in the realization of the classless society. "Freedom is defined in the transformation of the state from being an agent that dictates to society into one that is subordinate to it, and even today forms of government are free to a greater or lesser degree depending on the extent to which they limit the freedom of the state."[15] Today — here in the West as well as on the other side of the Berlin Wall — we are witnessing the attempt to abolish the difference between the state and society; not, however, with the intention of attaining the goal of a classless (which also means stateless) society. Rather, this obliteration of the difference has been set in motion by the state for its own advantage.

Hope for the emancipation of society lies in the fact that society and the state are not identical. But what we see is the state emancipating itself at the expense of society, spreading like a metastatic cancer, infesting and penetrating all parts of society, engulfing more and more what had formerly been separate social realms. Society is being nationalized: any remaining community or self-reliance that it possesses *as* a society is now to be considered "state property." This ongoing attempt to liquidate society in its capacity as something that exists outside of and qualitatively apart from the state is a conclusive step on the road toward a total state-society, toward what Thomas Mann called "state totality," a step that has already succeeded once in fascism.

Society versus the state — this formulation means the determination to check the state's totalitarian drive toward expansion and power. I must not allow myself to love "our" government, but to remind it of the fact that the state, if indeed there is such a thing (the concept, as already stated, is in no way binding), exists for society and should subordinate itself to society's goals. The state is *legally* subordinate to society: it receives its very authorization to exist from society, and not vice versa. Should I, as a member of society, have to justify my existence to the state? Should I have to offer the state reasons why I behave in such and such a fashion, why I think or say this or that, or why I behave politically the way I do and not in another way? Should the editors of the Mescalero text justify themselves to the state and to its courts? Shouldn't the state really offer substantiation and justification for why *it* has poked its nose into this matter in the first place?

It seems that love of our government has already made itself so much at home in our hearts — hearts so loyal to and so colonized by the state — that we hardly notice how much the state has expropriated society and the degree to which it is progressing unimpeded in this endeavor. It makes no sense to bemoan the ruling of the Berlin Supreme Court on the Mescalero publication as a further indication of the disintegration of democratic rights, etc., if we do not recognize that a step has been made toward the "nationalization of conflicts"[16] which are integral to the society and which, therefore, can *only* be legitimately decided by society. The state must not be allowed to regulate social conflicts of a political (not criminal) nature, whether through the courts or with the help of executive agencies. It will only be limited in this way, however, if a public attack is made on the state's monopoly on definition and upon the "lords of interpretation who are cultivated by the state."[17] In this way, the state would

15. Karl Marx, "Randglossen zum Programm der deutschen Arbeiterpartei" in *Marx und Engels. Werke 19* (Berlin, 1973), p. 27.

16. Compare Oskar Negt, "Wider die deutsche Verstaatlichung von Konflikten," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, Nov. 26, 1977.

17. Erhard Denninger, ed., *Freiheitliche demokratische Grundordnung. Materialien zum*

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not lose the right granted it by society to act against terrorists, bank robbers, and pilfering pedestrians. But the limitations of its powers must be clearly marked out. The growing tendency toward the nationalization of society, toward the expropriation of the substance of society by the state, toward the nationalization of social and political conflict must be fought.

Staatsverständnis und zur Verfassungswirklichkeit in der Bundesrepublik (Frankfurt am Main, 1977), p. 370.

GERMANY YESTERDAY AND TODAY: A DISCUSSION WITH JEAN-PAUL SARTRE, ALICE SCHWARZER, AND DANIEL COHN-BENDIT*

Sartre: I consider the key issue to be the question of guilt, and it is important to pose this question to two persons who, like you, are both German and French. You, Alice, you are German and you have lived for a long time in France, and you, Dany...

Alice Schwarzer: Yes, I would like very much to talk about it. But we also think it is important to discuss everyday life, and some apparently positive aspects of Germany.

Sartre: All right, but let's start with the guilt question.

Daniel Cohn-Bendit: The problem is that the absolutely uninterrupted continuity between fascism and the post-war era has completely closed German society to a whole series of thoughts. This block began right after World War II. As a matter of fact, the free world has played on this German guilt by giving Germany the absolutely fantastic role of policeman at the front line of the battle against communism. For Germany, this was a dream come true; it gained a raison d'être without confronting its problems. 'Sure, we made some errors, but fascism is finished, we are a democracy now... And still more: everyone looks at us and confirms our role as bridge-head in the ideological conflict of democracy and communism.' And the worst is that East Germany plays exactly the same role on the other side. East Germany says, 'The problem of fascism isn't ours since the evil is on the other side; we only have good people.' Therefore East Germany has never really asked the fundamental question: why did the people accept fascism? The senseless explanation of fascism given by East Germany simply blames big industry, etc. All the guilty ones are in the West, and the East Germans were either in the resistance or else only average people.

Schwarzer: Meanwhile, in West Germany, those who neither entirely accepted the fascist ideology nor belonged to the left opposition are trapped in a psychological conflict. The sorrow that was never expressed produces a profound self-doubt that leaves us very vulnerable. It is important to note, for example, that the German Left, as well as the German feminists, are much more susceptible to Manichaean thought than the Left elsewhere.

*This interview originally was published in *Les Temps Modernes*, July-August 1979. Translated by Kathy Vetter.

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Cohn-Bendit: They are an accurate reflection of all of German society, which only thinks in black and white.

Schwarzer: There is an enormous need to rationalize, to avoid implicating oneself, to conceal one's emotions.

Cohn-Bendit: I'm no follower of Willy Brandt, but there was a moment of grandeur when he kneeled at Auschwitz: he was moved, and he let himself go.

Schwarzer: Significantly, many Germans considered this inappropriate.

Cohn-Bendit: Yes, what saves us is rationality and rigidity. If we let ourselves go, who knows what would happen....

Schwarzer: The symptoms of this inflexibility are, for example, the specific forms of the German repression. Take the *Berufsverbot*. Or women. Giscard d'Estaing has not missed an occasion in years to hold a big conference on the women's problem. The subject does not even exist for Schmidt. Of course, the situation of women in France is barely different from that of women in Germany, and the measures taken by those in power don't go very far. But in Bonn they are slow and stupid, they don't know how to get going. It is the same with the *Berufsverbot*. It is repression in the Teutonic manner. The point of *Berufsverbot* isn't getting rid of a few dissidents, but rather intimidating the entire population. It is a scheme of opportunism. This same scheme was taken up in France, but in a more subtle form, and that is where all the difference lies.

Cohn-Bendit: The *Berufsverbot* is also a response by those in power to the anti-authoritarian movement. The anti-authoritarian movement took the problem of guilt seriously, because it said that the structures that nurtured fascism were in fact the authority structures in ourselves and society. The anti-authoritarian movement created an educational crisis in terms of behavior in the schools, teacher-student relations, professor-student relations, etc. It questioned the whole authority structure, which the traditional French Left, the Communists, never even attempted to do. But in France, on the other hand, there is an intermediate layer of intellectuals that doesn't exist in German. Whatever we may think of "Le Monde," for example — it certainly isn't the newspaper that I would put out — it is at least a liberal paper that talks about many issues and which doesn't have an equivalent in Germany. All the existing newspapers in Germany are political newspapers, ideologically marked, or Social Democrat, or of the right.

Schwarzer: But not openly...

Cohn-Bendit: No, they are allegedly neutral.

Schwarzer: It is very intersting to analyze the very gloomy press situation in Germany. And I'm far from idealizing the situation elsewhere because I have lived abroad too long to be ignorant of the situation. But in general, we suffer considerably from what I would call intellectual eclipse in Germany. Today, intellectually, we are not a very rich country. We have developed certain things...and it is very interesting. But, it is true that the discussions in France are much more intellectually stimulating, they are more profound. One is freer to think.

Cohn-Bendit: I agree.

Sartre: I had a terrible impression at Stuttgart when the journalists were questioning me. I sensed men incapable of true human relations. It was a relationship between conservative newspapers and myself. The reporters were inventing what the conservative newspapers could say.

Schwarzer: But that was also the fault of your friends. You were instrumentalized. That is also very German. The way in which the Red Army Faction uses people, the inhuman relations I suspect that they maintain with friends as well as enemies. This attitude has reinforced the aggressiveness of the journalists.

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Cohn-Bendit: It is necessary to point out that the RAF is also a mirror of German society, and was born of German society. Ulrike Meinhof, for example, was motivated by guilt as a convinced anti-fascist.... This is tragic. As much as I am opposed to the RAF as a political organization, I think it is necessary to ask: why the RAF? They all started out with real moral integrity. Gudrun, even Andreas, never supported the thesis of German non-guilt: "We said yes to Nazism, and yes to the Americans who bombarded Vietnam, and we still say yes."

Schwarzer: But at the same time, both the theory and the structure of the RAF are very German.

Cohn-Bendit: That's another issue.

Schwarzer: Their language, their vocabulary so much resembles that of the concentration camps. I find this idealization of the RAF, this way of taking things so simply, very symptomatic of the relationship of the French intellectuals to Germany. For us, it is very annoying, since it fits so well into the scheme: Germans are simply fascists, period, and the heroes are fighting against fascism. No! It is much more complicated than that.

Cohn-Bendit: Yes, I agree completely. But what I would like to underline is that many young people end up doing some very aberrant things in their form of opposition, especially in the RAF. For example, a German whom I knew very well died at Entebbe. Entebbe was the affair of the Air France plane and the Israelis. He was attracted to Israel in his youth, despite an anti-Semitic background. In fact, the politicization of many German leftists grew out of a conflict with their parents' anti-Semitism. We can take as a starting point. Ten years later they manage to take a place coming from Israel, separate the Jews from the non-Jews and reproduce the scenario of Auschwitz: the Jews on the left, the non-Jews on the right.... This absolutely horrible gesture. Between the starting point and the end lies the whole crisis of a part of the German youth. A Left has developed which has assimilated the contradictions of its environment. Their politics and their guerrilla activity are both typically German.

Schwarzer: Very German. In the most painful way.

Cohn-Bendit: I read an article two or three weeks ago about the chief of the criminal police in West Germany who said: "The RAF is perfect, only they are fighting on the wrong side."

Schwarzer: Here are the German soldiers who compliment each other. It is also very macho, this ideology. But it's not worth dwelling on, it is so evident.... To come back to the question of guilt: all the others have tried to hinder our mourning. We are guilty of not having fought back, which shows that we never went to the depths of our soul; in all sectors, on the right as well as the left, we risk shifting from one extreme to another. This is true for the German Left as well as for the feminist movement.

Cohn-Bendit: That is our reality. But Germany is also a myth. For you, Sartre, what is Germany?

Sartre: It is something like what you were describing. I lived in Germany before the war, under Nazism, and the Germans gave similar impressions. I didn't encounter any Nazis, the people I knew were not exactly Nazis. They were people who were learning to live with a Nazi government, who accepted the newspapers, the policies that were made, and even the war. But they were people who, by themselves, would not have formed the Nazi movement. They were obedient.

Schwarzer: But if you had to describe the national character of the German people, what would be its typical traits?

Sartre: A profound self-confidence. The French don't have as much confidence in themselves. The Germans have a confidence in their system that presupposes and

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implies an obedience to a certain rationality, to a German rationalism and a social goal. When this is present, one can be sure that the German way continues.

Schwarzer: Superficially, yes. Deep down, in their unconscious, however, the Germans are paranoid and not very sure of themselves. But I would like to go back to a point, because I suspect that you disagree. All things considered, do you share our opinion that repression is no stronger in Germany today than it is in France?

Sartre: I don't know if what you have just talked about is repression. But the impression I had the last time I went to Germany, that is, to Stuttgart, the impression that I had all over, from the soldiers who guarded the prisoners as well as from the people on the inside, passers-by or journalists, was of a terribly cold and inflexible people sticking to prescribed feelings and ideas. I asked myself: where are the real people, where is their individuality?

Cohn-Bendit: This is difficult to explain. There is surely a whole string of laws, especially concerning terrorism, that go much farther in Germany. I would say that the guerrilla groups are put outside of the law in the literal sense of the term: there isn't any law that protects them. They are victims of the envy of destruction. We want to destroy their personality. I mean we want to kill them.

Schwarzer: And what is distressing in Germany is how rapidly this goes. I will give you a short example, Sartre. In the fall of 1977 — the famous German Fall, the grand opening of the new repression — when I went out with friends in Cologne we were treated as "terrorists." Before that we were at times treated as "feminists" or as "Lesbians" (which they considered an insult). But that fall, we became terrorists overnight. The people had a new password. Everything alarming or simply not normal was then labelled terrorist.

Cohn-Bendit: In an interview with *Der Spiegel,* Schmidt remarked that there were laws in Germany that constituted attacks on individual liberty (I'm not citing from memory now, but textually): "Since the majority is for the laws, they are good." One can extrapolate, even though I'm sure he would howl, if we put these words in his mouth: "Since the majority of the German people is against Jews, it is right."

Sartre: What strikes me is that all of this can be taken as a denial of guilt. There is something in the past that must be explained. Otherwise, we fall into an explanation that is based solely on character and temperament.

Cohn-Bendit: But a man like Schmidt has never said that his not having resisted posed a problem for him. He is an official. Oh, he isn't a Nazi, he fought for his country in the war. But he wasn't active in the resistance. His acceptance of the war is a problem for the Germans. German society is a society in which all the mechanisms are designed to avoid conflict. German society not only refuses guilt, it refuses conflict as well. And as soon as there is a conflict, it is a catastrophe. All the institutions, all the laws, all the mechanics of social relations are made so that they can function without any waves. In German society individuals panic as soon as a conflict arises, or when something unexpected comes up. We observed this during the last steel workers' strike. It was actually a very normal sltrike. The workers wanted a 35-hour work week. But it came to be looked upon as an issue on which Germany's future depended. It was a big problem when the unions decided to contradict the management. Democracy, according to the managers, functions best when the management makes the propositions and those below accept. I believe that panic in the face of conflict is also linked to the problem of guilt and to the desire for Germany to assume a role in the world. Journalists reflect incredibly often on Germany's world role. Schmidt is accepted because he represents the German model of a functioning society which is good for world propaganda.

Schwarzer: We certainly must not stop functioning, because then we might be

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obligated to think.

Sartre: Why did Schmidt praise the film *Holocaust*? It surely was a way of showing the German guilt.

Cohn-Bendit: Yes, but it is evident that the Germans say: "We are guilty of liquidating the Jews." The politicians say to the world, "We are guilty." The problem is that no one explains *why* this was possible. Or they say that it was due to the evil Nazis. Which is true. But, what is also true is that there were people who obeyed, who permitted these evil people to do this. For example, one of the most prominent characters of *Holocaust* was Heydrich. He died in Prague. There is a story that no one in Germany knows and that no one ever mentioned during the discussion on *Holocaust:* Heydrich's right-hand man in Prague was Schleyer, the victim of terrorist kidnapping! If someone had said this on television, there would have been an outcry.

Schwarzer: You asked, Sartre, how it happened that Schmidt praised this film. But don't worry. All this was well thought out. The entire discussion on television had but one goal: to choke off all emotions, to channel the discussion. I saw my personal reaction after the film. I had a heavy heart because I was German. After the first episode I said to myself: I am not going to sleep well tonight. And then a fine discussion with some men and a woman followed. They started to speak in a manner that revolted me, and which at the same time smothered the emotional appeal to the Germans which was the merit of the film. So those who decided, who agreed to air it — because to refuse it would not have made a good impression — they had carefully planned the result.

Cohn-Bendit: It was really done in the German way.

Schwarzer: And all this was done so that it didn't become a political affair, so that it didn't stir up the people too much.

Sartre: Nevertheless, you say it made a lot of noise in Germany.

Cohn-Bendit: Yes, in spite of it all, for me the merit of *Holocaust* is especially the rediscovery of the anti-Semitic dimension. Because there are practically no Jews in Germany, the show forced the Germans to confront the Jews! It is because of this that I find the film good.

Sartre: But all this is not very encouraging.... Where are the positive sides of your life in Germany?

Cohn-Bendit: Now that I am no longer forbidden to leave, everyone asks if I will return to France. I say no, it isn't that simple. I have a way of life, and I want to live that way, and I don't see how I could in France. So I'm not sure, I'm very uncertain. I'm looking around. Everyone asks me, "But if you have the opportunity to escape..." As a matter of fact it is because of my living situation. My lover is in Germany, and I can't change that overnight — and then there are my relationships with those with whom I live and the ways of life there that I don't find in France. I'm not saying that I couldn't find three or four with whom I could live in a commune, but it is a total atmosphere, a daily structure. On the other hand, I am fascinated by the possibility of engaging in politics in France. I believe that in France even the working class does not think only of conforming to the social norms — although I don't believe that the working class is the avant-garde. In any case, I'm caught between two countries. The point of this debate on Germany is ultimately not to use the German myth for political reasons.

Sartre: Absolutely.

Cohn-Bendit: This can be from the left or the right. The right admires Germany's ability to function, while the Left, without any real knowledge of Germany, simply says "it is horrible." And all that Germany produces, positive or negative, we ignore. I am frightened by this aspect of the debate on Germany; we don't base anything on German reality, but on myths, our own preconceptions.

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Schwarzer: Because there is this suffocating environment....

Cohn-Bendit: That's it. This suffocating environment pushes the people in what we could call, negatively, a sort of ghetto, or positively, a counter-environment which develops new forms of life and announces another society but which does not define itself along political lines. That is to say that it is not only the "left" or the "leftists," it is a whole group of movements which are by their function, by their thought, by their contents *against* this society. I include the women's movement in this group. It is not linked to the leftist movement or politics and all that, but it is a victim of the same phenomenon....

Schwarzer: Absolutely.

Cohn-Bendit: And I believe that this is specific to Germany. When I return to France now I am very surprised by the discussions that relate how the community movement of 1974-75 fell flat on its face. It was a negative experience in the sense that it did not work. In Germany, on the other hand, a huge majority of those who live in communes today cannot imagine themselves living otherwise on a long-term basis. They can, of course, from time to time stay alone. But there is this feeling, this need to be together.

Schwarzer: It is normal in Berlin, Frankfurt and Cologne to live together. And this communal life carries with it a complete experience, it makes you discover things.

Cohn-Bendit: And it raises questions of everyday individualism, for example, the social functions of men-women, women-men, in an attempt to pose collectively one of the most burning problems of human relationships, the problem of sexuality. I'm not making this into the sole issue, but all the same I have the impression that this form of collective living, of community in practice, is a step forward.

Schwarzer: I returned to Germany permanently in 1974. I owe my political consciousness above all to the MLF Parisian. From this viewpoint I am indebted to France. In Germany I found a feminist movement that was also a victim of this German sickness: super-rationalization. But rationalization is a male domain, and German women were trapped for a long time in a realm that was not their own and which needed to be criticized. This has led some feminists to go to the opposite extreme now, to a total mystification and so-called "new femininity." On the other hand, many German women, exactly like the men of the Left, have created communes, changed lifestyles and put into effect projects. Now when I return to France, I find myself in an absurd situation, finding that there isn't even a women's center in Paris, my feminist intellectual homeland, while even the smallest German town has one. Certainly I'm always happy talking with my French friends, but nothing exists concretely. In Germany, however, there isn't a town where there aren't tens or hundreds of communes where women live, work and interact together.

Cohn-Bendit: Now, in almost every town, there is a center for battered women.

Schwarzer: Yes, we've wrangled the necessary money from the government. And *Emma,* for example....

Cohn-Bendit: Wait, let me say it because I think that it can be said more forcefully from the outside. The big difference between *Emma* and *F Magazine* defines very precisely — negatively as well as positively — the difference between France and Germany. Servan-Schreiber, a businessman and an important figure, said: women, they are something, they can bring in money. Does he perhaps even think they are important? I don't know. He throws himself in. He gives the money. He holds up an integrated project like all the big projects in France, integrated to the social system. In Germany, it is absolutely unthinkable that someone like Augstein, who is the director of *Spiegel,* would give money to a relatively autonomous project.

Schwarzer: And there is the difference. In Germany, *Emma,* which has the same

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circulation as *F Magazine*, is in the hands of the women radicals! So we have realized a counter-project, a parallel project of considerable strength. And here in France, where feminists thought and wrote five years ago what *Emma* has just discovered today, there isn't one single feminist that stands out. On the other hand (and this is also symptomatic) there is an excellent theoretical review "Feministes Questions." In Germany there isn't much on the theoretical level. Our strength is in practice. That explains furthermore the quantitative richness of the feminist press in Germany. There is *Emma*, which is published by professionals, has a circulation of 150,000 and is available on all the newsstands and which addresses itself especially to those outside of the feminist movement. There is also *Courage*, which addresses itself above all to leftist and feminist circles. It also has a large circulation. And finally there is, in almost every town, a visible feminist figure. While in France!

Cohn-Bendit: As for the leftist press, I work for a local newspaper that prints 7,000 and sells 6,500. Every city in Germany has a newspaper called the "local counter-information," which speaks to a wide range of problems. All these newspapers must put out 250,000 issues. If we add the feminist press and the homosexual press to this, we would get about a million.

Sartre: Sold?

Cohn-Bendit: Yes, sold.

Sartre: That would mean 2 million readers.

Schwarzer: Many more, Sartre. For a journal like *Emma*, for example, it is necessary to multiply by six or eight.

Cohn-Bendit: Yes, in this sense our communal structure works to our disadvantage. We discussed this the other day in a funny way. Communes reduce consumption, and only one or two copies are brought into a commune of eight people.

Schwarzer: And the press isn't all. For example, there are the day-care centers. Why these day-care centers? It's because there weren't very many and those that existed were too authoritarian. But you, Dany, are better qualified to talk about them because you have worked in them. And then, in almost every town, there are in addition alternative bookstores, alternative cafes, meeting places and movie theaters that are run by people who aren't out to make money, but who are friends.

Cohn-Bendit: Yes, all of these function collectively and truly through self-management. That is to say that the bookstore, for example, is owned by those who work in it, there isn't a manager. That has never worked in France, while in Germany there have been lots of experiments, and they have survived. But a problem arises, due to the conflict between official society and the counter-society. Challenges to the functioning of our counter-culture are perceived as dangers and this generates new norms, a new normality, which may become catastrophic.

Schwarzer: As a matter of fact, the black versus white thoughts of the time of fascism have been reproduced in parallel terms: the friend is the enemy. One is for or against. I wasn't used to this in France, it suffocates me. Perhaps this is why we are less creative individuals, with such little flexibility, even though we have the strength that permits us to act and accomplish things.

Cohn-Bendit: For example, Vietnam played a big role for the student movement. Today we perceive more and more that it was less of real Vietnam than our projection of a creation of our needs. But a debate on Vietnam wouldn't take place in Germany today. Why? Because we are afraid and don't think that we can permit ourselves, *vis-à-vis* this official society that we attacked on the issue of Vietnam, to recognize that Vietnam wasn't at all what we made it out to be. We are afraid of re-evaluating either our own position on this issue or the main reasons for the German revolt.

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Schwarzer: There is also the effort for demarcation: one must not cover the same subject as the enemy.

Sartre: There is then a feminist movement that is developing well, and there is a socialism to which you subscribe. All right, these are some examples, but they are not big things, because behind it all there is the guilt, which I believe dominates all of Germany. Even as the denial of guilt. The denial of this guilt by a person on the Right implies an acceptance of it. To refuse something is always to accept it in a certain way.

Schwarzer: And if you, Sartre, were speaking of France, this would be positive or negative?

Sartre: There isn't any guilt.

Cohn-Bendit: I don't think that there are many positive things in France.

Sartre: There aren't any positive things, but there isn't any guilt either. France is actually having a rough time. We have fallen back to a democracy of the right, to a democracy that I would say isn't a democracy. Because of this, France is no longer an example.

Schwarzer: Exactly right. I'm very annoyed in foreign countries by the way they use the German myth. An example: the way in which Beale Klarsfeld acts. Certainly her hunt for Nazis is better than knitting. But, it is very unsatisfactory and even dangerous if the connection to fascism in France and Germany is not made. I remember that a lot of upsetting things went on when I was in France between 1969 and 1974. But we talk of the hunt for old Nazis as if it was something spectacular and exotic, something having no like with the present.

Cohn-Bendit: Yes, that's it. I mean to say that if we had the same round-table discussion with three or four French persons I believe that we would have realized at the end of two hours that we hadn't said many positive things about France.

Sartre: Certainly not.

Schwarzer: As a matter of fact this guilt, if it was really felt, could be very positive for Germany.

Cohn-Bendit: Yes, but I always come to this conclusion: If there was guilt on the part of the German power elites, who can be faulted? It was the power elites who managed national socialism and who have been the active forces in the reconstruction of Germany. There is only one solution, which is for the elites to say, "We reject the power. We refuse to continue to run this society." And the German people must say: "We understand that it is our authority structure that leads us to identify with strong men and to give them all the power, to revere them." What does this mean? That the result of the guilt should be that the German people would take the power into their own hands and transform it themselves.

Schwarzer: We have gone so far down the road of horror that it will take a lot to remedy the situation.

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FROM THE HOLOCAUST TO THE *HOLOCAUST*

by Claude Lanzmann*

As the war ends, the massive revelation of the genocide committed against the Jewish people — and of the way it was carried out — stupefies the Western world. Infected to the core by the poison of anti-Semitism — and knowing that, to varying degrees, they are almost all guilty — the European nations understand and recognize the immensity and unique nature of the crime with blinding immediacy. So all is now clear, neither discussion nor contestation nor denial is possible; the Nazi crime has no precedent and, at the same time, it is unsurpassable precisely because it is an absolute crime.

What provokes this horrified silence is not that the Jews had once again been the chosen victims: the Holocaust would not have been possible without the European tradition of twenty centuries of persecution and hatred of the Jews which prepared the ground everywhere. No, the stupefaction is born of the unendurable discovery that anti-Semitism, a common trait shared by the nations, could lead to such extremes and culminate in a slighter unequalled in the history of humanity. Things had gone too far and the dominant sentiment is that the Jewish people has paid the highest price once and for all: if anti-Semitism had led to Auschwitz, then it must either be banished forever or made impossible. It is as if the Holocaust established forever the theoretical impossibility of anti-Semitism.

In the organized, planned, bureaucratic massacre of 6 million Jews — a task requiring patience and perseverance, carried out without anger in the name of publicly proclaimed ideological imperatives — the human race realizes the vertiginous dimensions of its capacity for crime against itself. The human race itself is radically called into question, stricken to the heart by the monstrous crimes perpetrated against the Jewish people. No ordinary, existing law is adequate to judge or assess the Holocaust, the entirely new metaphysical-juridical concept of "crime against humanity" is called for.

It really is a question of a crime against the human essence, of a metaphysical crime committed against the very being of man on the person of every Jew who was killed. Again — and one hopes for the last time — the Jewish people has fulfilled its role as the people who bears witness. The cry from the skies of Auschwitz and Treblinka will resound to the end of the world; it signals the final limit of humanity's capacity for inhumanity. Auschwitz and Treblinka are not, can never be, comparable to anything else. Let there be no mistake: no one can have the obscene audacity to deny the Holocaust its specificity, its unique character, by diluting it, by submerging it in the problem of universal evil, or by subsuming it under general categories, such as the "horrors of war" or the "victims of fascism." Despite the millions of dead on both sides, despite the horror of Hiroshima or of Dresden, one knows that the 6 million murdered Jews are not victims like the others: this exorbitant crime is of a different kind, of another order: it is literally an unnameable crime; the Nazi assassins themselves did not dare name it, as if that act would have made the crime itself impossible.

To say that the Holocaust is unique and incommensurable does not imply that it is an aberration that eludes all intellectual or conceptual comprehension, which falls outside

*This article originally appeared in *Les Temps Modernes*, June 1979. Translated into English by Simon Srebrny.

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history and is denied the dignity of being a historical event. On the contrary, we consider the Holocaust to be a completely historical event, the legitimate, albeit monstrous, product of the entire history of the Western world.

But, broadly speaking, the Holocaust has not been accepted as a specific historical event. And one can doubt that it ever will be. The responsibility and the guilt of the majority of nations are too serious, the remorse and the shame too great and the crime too heavy: the burden of the Holocaust weighs ineluctably upon the modern world. After the horrified acceptance of the brutal fact of the extermination in the years immediately following World War II, after the recognition of the incommensurable character of the crime, the general tendency has been in the opposite direction. Thirty years after the catastrophe, we are faced with the extraordinary phenomenon of its rejection. The "honeymoon" of the Jewish people and the world has come to a definite end. We take stock of our illusions: the indestructible phoenix of anti-Semitism is everywhere reborn from its ashes in all its old guises as well as in the more modern, more "democratic" garb of anti-Zionism. The question of the Holocaust becomes "How do we get rid of it?"

The East and the West, the Right as well as the Left, seek to get free of it at all costs and by all means, to forget it without ever having understood it, to falsify it, to deny it. The renaissance of anti-Semitism and the rejection of the Holocaust are dialectically linked. The anti-Semitism which seeks the death of the Jew has to deny that the extermination ever took place in order to be able to give itself free rein and acquire a new legitimacy in order to gain the authority to kill again.

One rejects the Holocaust either by banalizing and trivializing it or by expelling it from history under the pretext that it is precisely an aberration of history. In the first case, what happened to the Jews is made to seem just very ordinary and no big deal. History is just succession of massacres and one cites at random Saint Bartholomew's Day, the genocide of the Armenians in 1915, the Gulag, or the segregationist violence in the United States. As for the Turkey of Sultan Abdul Hamid, as it was the most developed and most modern nation of the Western world, the spiritual homeland of Goethe, Kant and Schiller, the land of the Ruhr magnates, Krupp and IG Farben. And, to be sure, the Sultan — a precursor thus of Adolf Hitler — had also built himself a coherent doctrine of the universal scope and constructed a whole ideology to justify the annihilation of the Armenians! One can pursue the comparison term by term and each time demonstrate its weakness, absurdity and perversity. But the goal of trivialization has been reached: after a certain point no one knows any longer what is at stake, and nothing can be distinguished from anything else. The Holocaust has lost its unique singularity, and thus it has vanished.

From this perspective, it is not at all certain that the success of the American television feature *Holocaust* is a sign of a growth in awareness. The sudden "discovery" of the Jewish martyrology by an immense public and the unanimity of compassion are perhaps the ultimate ruses of a history that denies the singularity of the Holocaust in the very moment in which it claims to represent it. The treatment and the means used are eminently suspect: the Jewish family with which millions of Americans and Germans identified themselves was chosen so that precisely this identification would be possible. This is the essence of *Holocaust:* it was necessary that the Jewish victims differ in no way from the spectators or even from their executioners: everything that could make the Jews seem different had been erased in order to make their humanity visible and perceptible. All trace of otherness has been effaced; thus, the Jewish family is "assimilated," and most of the actors are not themselves Jewish. But the opposite would have been right. The humanity of the victims ought to have been made more striking

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and more profound to the extent that they had at the start appeared different from us. Would television viewers of the world have identified so easily with the Jewish men and women of Poland, of the Ukraine, or of Bielorussia, with their clothing, their traditions, their particularity, their strangeness?

Even in the gas chambers (it takes an iron constitution to dare to represent what occurred there, for no one who went in there came back among us to testify), the American heroes never lose their "humanity." They await death, gravely and with dignity, as "good form" requires. The reality was different: after years of ghettoization, of terror, of humiliation and of famine, those driven into the death chambers by whips and clubs had neither the occasion nor the sang-froid to die with nobility. The representation of what really happened would have been in fact unendurable; it would, at least, have never permitted any consoling identification. But *Holocaust* is and can only be fiction. The reality — a fundamental lie, a moral crime, the destruction of remembrance — defies all attempts to render an account of it.

The Holocaust is unique in that it creates a circle of flames around itself, a limit which cannot be crossed because a certain absolute horror cannot be transmitted. Pretending to cross that line is a grave transgression. One must speak and hold silent at the same time: knowing that here silence is the most authentic mode of speech; one must maintain a protected region like the eye of a hurricane. Transgression and trivialization are the same thing here: the Hollywood *feuilleton* transgresses *because* it trivializes, and thereby abolishes the unique character of the Holocaust as the incomparable worst of all crimes.

I add — and this is fundamental — that there is an absolute specificity to anti-Semitism which cannot be reduced in any way to the generalities of political or racial conflict. Anti-Semitism is both more than and different from a simple case of facism. The fate and the history of the Jews cannot be compared to those of any other people. The cyclic character of the persecution and hate against the Jews, the length and constancy of the antagonism, the power and extent of this hatred, the mythic and phantasmatic productions which it has engendered make anti-Semitism a unique phenomenon and render all reductionist explanations sadly ridiculous. The prodigious will to live of the Jewish people explains the constancy and escalation of the hatred of them to the ultimate peak, the Holocaust. Raul Hilberg has expressed this soberly in a magnificent formula: "The missionaries of Christianity had said in effect: you do not have the right to live among us as Jews. The secular masters who followed proclaimed: you do not have the right to live among us. The German Nazis decreed finally: you do not have the right to live."

This quotation provides a preliminary response to those who now regard the Holocaust as an anomaly, an aberration completely beyond comprehension or historical interpretation. Furthermore, the Jews were its victims, even if this were an aberration, the aberration is therefore at the very heart of their own history. This explains their wish to find a meaning in it. Twelve years of methodical persecution, a slow process of destruction pursued with the knowledge and under the sight of all, which the annihilation of one third of their people, permit at least the Jews to ask what made the anomaly possible.

But the aberration theory essentially tends to sweep away the very idea of the historical responsibility of Germany and of the other nations. It must be remembered that the extermination of the Jews was not the act of a handful of mad men. The process of destruction could not have been accomplished without the basis of a general consensus of the German nation. The annihilation of 6 million Jews was a complete and difficult task that posed immense and numerous problems: in order to carry it out, the

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active and patient participation of the whole administrative apparatus of a large, modern state was necessary.

In addition, Germany depended on the existence of an aggressively anti-Semitic world, particularly Poland, Hungary, Romania, and the Soviet Union. The famous Madagascar plan was first introduced by the Polish Lepecki Commission in 1936. Georges Bonnet, the French minister of foreign affairs, discussed it calmly with von Ribbentrop. The chief of the Swiss police was the first to require that the passports of German Jewish refugees be marked with the letter J. When he condemned the Jews, Hitler was not using an incomprehensible language: he was understood and knew himself to be understood. He commented on this more than once. "I am convinced that at bottom the democracies are not displeased that we are relieving them of their Jewish riff-raff."

If the democracies had been actively opposed to the persecution or — which amounts to the same thing — had opened their doors to the Jews, the Holocaust would not have taken place or at least would not have attained such dimensions. The Holocaust was only possible because the nations washed their hands of the persecution of the Jews, left the Nazis alone with the "problem." Such are the historical responsibilities that one can pursue, case by case and step by step, up to the scandalous failure to save the Jews of Hungary: "What will I do with a million Jews?" asked Lord Moyne, British high commissioner in Egypt.

One must underscore the two sides of the problem: the Holocaust is unique but not aberrant. It is not the work of a group of irresponsible, atypical criminals, but must be seen as the expression of the deepest tendencies of western civilization. All were fundamentally in agreement to murder those for whom there was no room.

The theory of the Holocaust as an aberrant phenomenon moreover permits a new appreciation and re-evaluation of Nazism today and authorizes Germany to reintegrate its history. Unable to confront the Holocaust, Germany behaved for 30 years as if Nazism had never existed. It was not discussed. Fat and rich, Germany was also without a past; its young men — those now between 30 and 40 years old — were lifeless. This modest silence of the great German mass had, however, at least one merit: its implicit admission of *the absolute centrality of the Jewish question to Nazi ideology and practice*, its recognition that the destruction of the Jews had been the very heart of Nazism, that the *Holocaust was the enactment of Nazism.*[1]

Now all is different: time has done its work and new generations of Germans have emerged who have no reason to avoid a history that they were never taught. Also, the Jewish people has survived and is more alive and present than ever; finally and above all, the state of Israel exists and exercises violence in its turn. The Jews have gained the means of institutionalized violence through their state.[2] The discovery that the *Jews also*

1. I subscribe to the idea that Hitler's war was basically a "war against the Jews": the launching of the war in the East and the setting in operation of the "final solution" are organically linked. The East is not only the great reservoir of "Jewry," but also in the phantasms of the German Weltanschauung the locus of absolute indeterminacy, of the unformed and the vague. *In the East, all is possible,* it is in the East that one exterminates, one deports from the West to the East (cf. the protocols of the conference of Wannsee: "to comb from West to east"), *the East is the place for slaughter par excellence.*

2. From the massacre of innocents at Ponary, Sdolbunov and Babi-Yar, from the naked women running in rows of five toward the gas chambers terrorized by the whips of the Ukrainian guards, to the warriors of modern Israel, via the desperate revolts in the Sobidor extermination camp or in the Warsaw ghetto, the problem of the *reappropriation of violence* by the Jews is central. Whatever may have been the courage of groups or individuals, the Jews of Europe, in their entirety, were condemned in advance because deprived of all *political status*; rendered stateless by a bureaucratic definition, they had become "superfluous people," people who were the living dead.

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kill is a marvelous and liberating revelation — "and what if the Jews themselves had been Nazis?" This relieves the old guilt and thereby permits the history of Germany to be rewritten in order to assimilate Nazism and the Holocaust is transformed into a secondary and unimportant phenomenon. Auschwitz is virtually suppressed. Such is the current tendency among German historians, even reputable and serious ones, such is the implication of films shown in Europe. The stunning success in Germany itself of Joachim Fest's film *Hitler, a Career* has the same origin: one is finally free to exalt the "positive aspects" of the man Hitler and of his accomplishments. The Holocaust, in any case, is relegated to the extreme background: it is the bad side of a man and of a historical period that had all the same some excellent aspects. And it is not at all certain that the negative predominates: the balance is at least equal.

Hatred for the Jews becomes simply an aberration of Hitler's character. "It is true, he did not like the Jews and he exaggerated." Is the aberration then in the aversion itself or in its exaggeration, in anti-Semitism or in the *excesses* of anti-Semitism? The circle has been closed and anti-Semitism, until now banished and condemned to an underground existence, can reappear in broad daylight — justified, founded with reason in the very being of the Jew — bearing its most classical traits: thus, *The Shadow of the Angels*, a film by Daniel Schmidt and R.W. Fassbinder, takes over all the stereotypes of the Nazi thematic of anti-Semitism with a stypefying innocence, as though it had reinvented them.

This is where we stand 30 years later. *The question is not primarily: How was the Holocaust possible?, but How is it possible, 30 years after the Holocaust, that we are here?*

A parallel tragedy establishes itself between the forgetting, the rejection, the negation of the Holocaust on the one side and the conditions which made it possible on the other: just as the Jews were killed in the most poignant solitude, in an absolute abandonment in which their cries were never heard — because the death of the Jews was after all merely a phenomenon without importance with respect to the course of history — so will the memory of the Holocaust, of this crime against humanity, soon be no more than our rumination, instead of being the duty, the mission, the sacred trust of all of humanity. Just as our people were left alone with their exterminators, so do we remain alone with the living wound of a crime without measure.

For us, as the philosopher Emil Fackenheim admirably wrote, "The European Jews massacred are not just of the past, they are the *presence of an absence.*" This is to say that they have caused it to be and each day cause it to be *that we are both of them and shall never cease to be born and to be reborn of them, that we Israelis and Jews of the Diaspora are bound to and anchored in the Holocaust.* Far from disappearing with time, its consequences and implications do not cease to unfold and to grow deeper. The destruction of 6 million of our people — the attempt to annihilate a whole people — has radically modified the Jewish universe, the Jews' perception of themselves and their attitude to others. The inflexibility of Israel — the root, it is alleged, of its isolation — and the inflexibility of its politics stem precisely from the fact that Israel knows itself to be the only guarantee — absolutely the only one — of this "never again," this sacred oath to which after Auschwitz we had thought the nations would subscribe.

Until now, all the films dealing with the Holocaust have tried to show its emergence from the oblique course of history and chronology: they start in 1933 with the Nazi rise to power — or even earlier, presenting the diverse currents of German anti-Semitism in

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In the world of the Nation-States, where the only protection one could enjoy is that of a state, they had no chance.

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the 19th century ("völkisch" ideology, formation of the German national consciousness, etc.). Year by year, step by step, they derive the extermination of 6 million men, women and children. As if such a mass slaughter could ever be rationally explained!

There are certainly reasons and explanations for the destruction of 6 million Jews: the character of Adolf Hitler, his relation to the Jew as the "bad father," the defeat of 1918, the unemployment, the inflation, the religious roots of anti-Semitism, the social function of the Jews, the image of the Jew, the indoctrination of the German youth, the rape of all Germany charmed by its violator Adolf Hitler, Germanic discipline, the Jewish spirit regarded as the absolute inverse of the German spirit. All these areas of explanation (psychoanalytic, sociological, economic, religious, etc.), whether taken one by one or all together, are at one and the same time both true and false: even if they were the necessary conditions for the extermination, they were not its sufficient condition. The destruction of the European Jews cannot be logically or mathematically deduced from this set of presuppositions. There is a break in continuity, a hiatus, a leap, an abyss between the enabling conditions for the extermination and the fact of the extermination itself. Extermination cannot be deduced from prior causes. The attempt to do so is in a certain sense a denial of its reality, a refusal of the upsurge of violence, the expression of a desire to clothe its implacable nudity, to ward it off and therefore to refuse to see it, to look it in the face in its utmost aridity and incomparability. In a word, it is to make it weaker. All discourse that seeks to explain violence is an absurd dream of non-violence.

It is from naked violence that one must start and not, as one always does, from the campfires, the songs, the fair heads of the Hitler Youth; nor from the fanaticized German masses, from the cries of "Heil Hitler!" or the millions of raised arms; nor from the series of anti-Jewish laws which, little by little, made life impossible for the German Jews, nor from the *Kristallnacht*. The chronological narrative sets out from the boycott of April 1933 to culminate *naturally* with the entry into the gas chambers of Auschwitz and Treblinka is not strictly speaking false, but it is sadly dull and one-dimensional. The issue is like a work of art and possesses another logic and another mode of narration: if, for example, one wants the spectator to be touched to the heart by the scandal of the Evian Conference, Evian should not appear in the film in its actual chronological position within the unfolding of the twelve-year history of Nazism. On the contrary, one must start with the end, with the night of December 7, 1941, when the 900 Jews of the small town of Kolo in the county of Konin near Lodz had the privilege of being the first to be gassed in the Final Solution in the woods of Ruszow. In my film, the Final Solution is to be sure not the endpoint of the narrative, but its point of departure: the scandal of Evian will only appear with all its force if the gas trucks are already in action and if the spectator is seized by the vertigo of the acceleration of history: *only three years* elapsed between Evian and the first gassings of the Jews of the Wartheland.

The florid rhetoric of the Latin American delegates at the conference and the hypocrisy of the British or American representatives only become murderous when confronted with the reality of the extermination, with the extermination in the process of being carried out. The end must already be known for there to be tragedy. Death must be present at the very origin of the narrative and mark all its episodes. Death must be the sole measure of the words, the silences, the actions, the refusals to act and the blindnesses that made it possible. Chronological narrative, because it is nothing but a succession of befores and afters, is anti-tragic in essence. Therefore death always occurs at its appointed time, that is to say, without violence and without scandal. The 6 million Jews did not die in their own time and that is why any work that today wants to render justice to the Holocaust must take as its first principle the fracturing of chronology. The suspense of the investigation — its difficulties and risks being themselves the cohesive

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part of my film — will be complemented by another suspence that I have called "historical" and which will always be based on the confrontation between a particular moment of the extermination and an occurrence of withholding help from someone in danger distant either in time or in space.

One does not kill legends by opposing memories to them, but only by confronting them with the inconceivable present of which they are the origin. The only way to achieve this is precisely to resuscitate the past as present, to reconstitute it in an atemporal immediacy. The Holocaust today is legendary, tied to television show titles and extended to the dimensions of a mythic narrative: it is the knowledge of non-knowledge, blurred, vague, stereotyped. And as is the case with all myths, increasing numbers of bold spirits wonder, not necessarily with malevolence, if that really happened after all. If in our days it is possible to write books on "the myth of the 6 million" or "the lie of Auschwitz," it is because all the reality of the Holocaust is dissolving in the evanescent distance and in the stereotyped meaningfulness of myth without ever having been conveyed fully. The characteristic of myth is to accommodate all attitudes, resisting no attempt at distortion. Once distortion has been accomplished, myth is more stubborn than the facts. How insipid, how insubstantial seem the *memories* of the survivors when compared to the inexact rigidity of the myth!

The worst crime, at once moral and artistic, which may be committed in creating a work of art devoted to the Holocaust, is to consider it as *past*. The Holocaust is either legend or of the present time, it is in no case of the order of memory. A film devoted to the Holocaust can only be a counter-myth, that is, an investigation into the presentness of the Holocaust, an investigation into a past whose wounds are so fresh and so keenly inscribed in consciousness that they are present in a haunting timelessness.

HOLOCAUST AND WEST GERMAN "RESTORATION"

by Barton Byg

The viewing of NBC's television series *Holocaust* by more than 20 million West Germans is one of the great pseudo-events of post-war German history. It has been treated as an apolitical phenomenon whereas its effects are political in the most powerful sense. *Holocaust* represents a major step in the process of West Germany's reunion with its Nazi past. It has been billed as the long sought-after *Vergangenheits-bewältigung:* West Germany has supposedly now confronted and overcome the hitherto tabooed Nazi legacy. That *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* has not occurred is not surprising. But the instrumentalization of *Holocaust* by the German political right wing must be examined. The public euphoria over *Holocaust's* "success" has tended to block the kind of discussion that the series should have triggered.

Three aspects of the reception of *Holocaust* need to be examined. First, the general West German political situation must be sketched, since this context made the audience ripe for the presentation of *Holocaust* and all the "enlightening information" it contained. Second, it is necessary to outline why the political right, which now includes most of the West German spectrum, has been the greatest benefactor of the *Holocaust*

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phenomenon. And third, it will be useful to inquire into the shortcomings of the Left in understanding or countering developments in this direction.

The situation in West Germany up to 1979 explains why the present period may be a political turning point. Best known abroad were the terrorists and the furor over the Filbinger case. Beyond this, there was an atmosphere, often referred to as a "restoration." The first sign of this was the "Radicals' Decree" of 1972 and parallel moves against politically active artists and publishers. It continues today as a tendency to self-censorship by those inclined to political activism and in a strong wave of conservatism across the rest of the spectrum. 1979 also marked the 30th anniversary of both the Federal Republic of Germany as well as the German Democratic Republic, and their post-Cold War competition is as intense as ever. They use every symbolic weapon available to represent "true German history" as well as the "good Germany" in world opinion, and thus insure the loyalty of their own citizens. It is in this context that the subject of *Holocaust* plays a central role. *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* was clearly unfinished business for West Germans. The uneasiness of West German authorities has also foreign sources. As West Germany becomes more and more clearly a world power and the dominating country in Europe, other countries (both in Europe and elsewhere) wonder just how different this German power will be from the last one. Given recent internal developments, the West German government has sufficient cause for embarrassment.

Several months before the screening of *Holocaust,* a parallel public phenomenon revealed how volatile emotions were on the question of the Nazi past, and the wider issues of national self-definition. November 9, 1978, saw nationwide observances of the 40th anniversary of *Reichskristallnacht* — the "Night of Broken Glass" orchestrated by the Nazis in 1938. Commemorative ceremonies were sponsored mainly by left liberal and religious organizations, youth groups of the Social Democrats, organizations of the victims of fascism and labor unions. Even the national political leadership took part in a service at the Cologne Synagogue, and thousands marched in silence across the country. The political debate behind this commemoration was lively. Leftist organizations successfully demanded that the ministries of education provide documentation on *Reichskristallnacht* and anti-Semitism to all schools. Right-wingers attacked the government for promoting a general lack of historical consciousness, especially among the youth, and blamed this for both the growth of the neo-Nazi and of radical leftist activity, which they equate. In the *Bundestag,* conservative opposition leader Helmut Kohl went so far as to claim: "I consider the issue of our concept of history at least as important as all those political issues of the day from tax reform to other questions of domestic policy. Because what is at issue here is the ultimate course, the basic spiritual and moral order of our republic."

Clearly, however, the right and left had opposite concepts of German history — even in the commemoration of this historical event. The right-wing Springer newspaper *Die Welt* located the revolution of November 9, 1918, as the origin of all the trouble. As the order represented by the Kaiser and the aristocracy was lost, Germany needed a substitute father figure, and found it only in Hitler. The more moderate paper *Frankfurter Rundschau* also cited the 1918 Revolution, but deduced from it and subsequent events a German hesitation to embrace democracy wholeheartedly. The editorial's final sentence was, "With the exception of anti-Semitism, was everything OK?" The government was therefore under pressure to provide some kind of response to the ever-uncomfortable "German Question." Just what image of "Germany" is West Germany developing? The left would like to base it on the attempts at democracy in 1918 and in Weimar, both of which were wiped out along with the Jews by the Nazis.

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The right would identify with the same glorious images of the Kaiser and of the Reich that Hitler identified with, except anti-Semitism and genocide. Anti-communism, however, should not be discredited by Hitler's association with it.

Thus, the stage was set for *Holocaust* and its aftermath. No one could foresee the effect of the screening of *Holocaust,* but initial comments on it changed with the first public reactions. Right-wing politicians and conservative journalists had been wary of the film, fearing it to be anti-German, or at least a cheapening misrepresentation of the Nazi period. Left and more moderate critics were surprisingly less political in their reactions, and merely vented their prejudices against American soap opera, television, etc. They considered the film too foreign to be serious. All were understandably nervous about the broadcast. If the expected reaction against the film were to come, with its German patriotic overtones of Nazi nostalgia — if the public were to massively reject the film as a lie, or at least as anti-German — the ensuing international publicity would not be flattering.

When the first episode was about half over on January 22, 1979, the tide began to shift. What may have been a political bombshell, or at least a stimulus for political discussion, became an emotional catharsis. The reporting of this phenomenon both in West Germany and in the U.S. has been a masterpiece of non-information about a non-event. Abroad, one is presented with the new and wondrous view of Germans weeping over crimes committed in their name. Many American reports never went beyond quotations of government officials. Within West Germany, so-called documentations were provided by experts along with the broadcast, both in print and on television, after each *Holocaust* segment. This "response," including the documentation, had virtually no content. The remarkable thing about the reception of *Holocaust* is that it could have been set off by anything.

Two things stand out in the reception of *Holocaust*: (1) The transparency of the series itself. It served merely as a stimulus for the majority of West Germans to think and speak of themselves as a national group with a national past. One is reminded of Fest's hope that collective guilt for Nazism could bridge the West German generation gap.[1] (2) This sudden opportunity to speak of the Nazi period revealed the willingness of most West Germans to identify with the Nazi state — at least enough to accept a feeling of collective guilt for it. And this collective guilt was the content of the *Holocaust* reception. The most dramatic evidence of the first point is the almost total absence of criticism of, or even reference to, the content of *Holocaust* itself. Beyond this is the astonishing absence of any commentary on what happened after 1945 as a result of these events. Instead, almost all commentators spoke in great detail of events leading to the extermination of the Jews, but very little of the pre-history of fascism, or even of fascism as an ideology or as a means of government. But most astonishing is that not a word was said to indicate that in 1945 any trace of what had been built to serve fascism remained in Germany, at least in the Western part. Instead, the documentation of the Nazi period served mainly to answer the question, "Was it really that bad?" And the almost gleeful reply was, "Yes, in fact it was worse." Parallel to this obsession with documentation of *what* the Nazis were rather thay *why* they were that way or what it meant for those who survived, was the almost universal tendency to inject personal anecdotes.

In almost all aspects, then, the topic of discussion was not *Holocaust* or the Jews, but Germany — "We the Germans," "The Nazis," "They," and again and again, "We." The unifying force behind this collective feeling of being *German* again was a general

1. Joachim Fest, "Gedanken zu Erinnerungen," in *Frankfurter allgemeine Zeitung*, Nov. 9, 1978.

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acceptance of collective guilt. Hitherto, the German attitude toward Nazi war crimes had been "I didn't know anything." Again, with remarkable unanimity, this claim of innocence through ignorance was displaced by an equally dubious acceptance of guilt through helplessness. No one went so far as to admit open support of the Nazis. Many, however, claimed to have understood the evil deeds but to have been too cowardly to oppose them.

This new stance is unsettling for several reasons. The basis for this guilt is the absoluteness of Nazi power. The Nazis are still believed to have been, as they depicted themselves (and as *Holocaust* affirmed) invincible with respect to mere fellow Germans. Thus, one need not feel *too* guilty for not having resisted since opposition was futile. Further, the guilt of helplessness is founded on the conviction that the individual's attitude was irrelevant, since the major guilt was earned by the Nazi state. The implication is that the state is the power that matters and, as long as it is virtuous, it must be kept strong. Individuals who resist are still regarded as dangerous troublemakers. Finally, the acceptance of the Nazi regime as a source of guilt for West Germans today is based on their identification as Germans now with what it meant to be Germans then, in the glory of Nazi power. As Henri Nansen wrote in *Stern* magazine, "if the victory over Poland is to be thought of as a German victory and not just the victory of the Bock and Rundstedt divisions, and the victory at Dunkirk a German victory. . . and the Battle of Tobruk a German victory and not just Rommel's private affair, then the murder of the Jews is also a German murder."

This limited identification with Nazism — allowing the nationally unifying and gratifying feeling of collective guilt — conforms with the ultra-right image of "german history." In this view, the Nazis may have been right in much that they did: in their aggressive nationalism, in their harshness toward dissent, in their control of the arts and professions, in their general racism, etc. The only exception is anti-Semitism and murder. *Holocaust* does not advocate these other traits of Nazism: it merely omits them.[2] Thus, the audience is allowed to draw its own conclusions concerning where the good Nazi ends and the evil one begins.

Now that they have *Holocaust* to legitimize them, the words "nation" and "German history" and "Germany" unqualified by "West" will occur more often in the West German vocabulary. The word *Holocaust* itself is now commonly used in a language to

2. To list the omissions of *Holocaust* would be both endless and futile, and the series should not be criticized for not being what it was never intended to be. But a few examples are needed to understand its ability to move the West German audience without alienating them. First of all, both the Jewish and non-Jewish protagonists are presented as types very close to the average middle-class values of both West Germans and Americans in 1979. Applied to these cultured, handsome and likeable people, the sufferings of the war for both sides inspires identification and pity. The Nazis' mechanisms for making the German masses believe in what they were doing, and to a great extent the realities of the war itself, are omitted. The political upheaval brought about by the end of the war is also neutralized by *Holocaust*. Only the Zionist path of Jewish resistance is portrayed, with its post-war fate to be discovered abroad in Palestine. The only communists present also have a home already, in the Soviet Union, and at the end of the film, the representative both of order and of the future is the American military occupation. From beginning to end, the German individual is not portrayed as being responsible for the fate of his country, and no Germans who stayed to shape the future are present except the family Dorf. The Uncle Kurt figure does speak the "redeeming phrase" of accepting guilt at the end, but he is hardly about to transform the self-definition of Germany in doing so. This is the formulation of Peter Maerthesheimer, who was largely responsible for the purchase of *Holocaust* and its improvement through German synchronization. His sensitive essay, which clearly stands apart from the rightward drift described here, opens the book *Im Kreuzfeuer: Der Fernsehfilm Holocaust — Eine Nation ist betroffen* (Frankfurt, 1979).

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which it was totally foreign last year. The *lesson* of *Holocaust* is that, far from being critical of the Nazi legacy, it legitimizes it. As a rehabilitated heir to Nazi power, it is no longer incongruous for West Germany to be a leading world power. Rather, now that West Germans have suffered through the sins of Nazism, they are all the more justified to apply all pressures necessary to see that power remains where it is now: in the hands of the good, repentant Germans, with President Carstens as a prime example. This also justifies all those methods necessary to insure that Germany is not once again subverted by its enemies: unemployment, inflation and political unrest. Those who insist, on the other hand, on identifying only with the victims of Nazism and have never known the awesome responsibility of holding near-cosmic power in their hands must not be trusted with that power now. This may explain the need of the West German "Center for Political Education," one of the main purveyors of *Holocaust* materials, to outline in one of its publications all the methods necessary to defend democracy.[3] These include everything from anti-terrorist troops to domestic surveillance. The publication also refers to the political screening of candidates for civil service jobs (the basis of *Berufsverbot*) as a "constitutional duty." Jointly sponsored by the government-owned television network, the "Center for Political Education" and the ministries of education, *Holocaust* became the answer to *Reichskristallnacht* — a source of national unity, approval of West German power both internal and external, and loyalty to the *status quo*.

The reasons for the Left's inability to understand these developments are horrifying. Generally, they are related to the tendency of leftist intellectuals in West Germany not to identify emotionally with either the country in which they live, the history of the labor movement or even with the history of the student movement.[4] Leftist commentators initially did not feel that *Holocaust* merited serious consideration. Articles ridiculed the series for being what it was: American, commercial, middle-class. Leftists refused to participate in the public response to *Holocaust,* partly because it meant an emotional identification with "Germany." Leftists refused to take seriously the contemptible middle classes either in their identification with the Nazis or with the Jews in the film. Instead of realizing that these are meaningful for *today's* Germans, leftists complained of the absence of the historical working class in the film, seeking in it an unreal object for their own identification. In the wake of *Holocaust,* leftist writers focused on the denial of collective guilt for Nazi crimes. They asserted repeatedly that Hitler did not, after all, have an elective majority, but rather that a few powerful capitalist brought him to power. They refuse to understand that the West German public is smart enough to choose capitalism, power *and* guilt over innocence and a lack of national identity. Contrary to the Left's rhetoric, it is not merely irrationalism that hailed *Holocaust,* but the acceptance of a West German state that at the moment is doing quite well for itself and its loyal citizens.

The most direct articulation of what is behind the *Holocaust* reception is found in psychiatrist Margarete Mitscherlich-Nielsen's critique of the lack of a West German "political imagination." In an article entitled "The Necessity of Mourning," which managed to creep into the Fischer paperback "documenting" *Holocaust*,[5] she argues

3. "Streitbare Demokratie," *Information zur politischen Bildung,* 179, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (January 1979).

4. For instance, one may have wondered why the 40th anniversary of *Reichskristallnacht* was commemorated so widely, but not the 30th. But no public note was taken of the fact that in 1968, taking to the streets met with a different response. And only French students would think of shouting, "We are German Jews!"

5. *Im Kreuzfeuer...*, *op.cit.*, pp. 207-216.

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that West Germany still suffers from an "inability to mourn" (the title of a book that appeared several years ago, co-authored with A. Mitscherlich). She is alone among mainstream commentators in insisting on the present legacy of Nazism, the psychological mechanisms of avoiding the "task of mourning" needed to overcome it and, above all, the contemporary political effects of these conditions. In fact, Mitscherlich-Nielsen does not even mention *Holocaust* in her contribution to the volume dedicated to it.[6] Yet, leftists identify as little with her as with Syberberg. This is mainly because they reject both her insistence on collective emotional participation in the Nazi legacy, even by the second generation, and her belief that this situation can only be remedied by emotional means. She calls into question the entire tradition of "anti-fascist enlightenment" by arguing that, "A seeming objectification of the past can only lead to a renewed repression of our emotional participation in it."[7] Beyond these two points, Mitscherlich-Nielsen's description of the present political stagnation in West Germany applies to the Left at least as well as to the rest of the country.

In tracing the ways of avoiding the task of mourning since 1945, Mitscherlich-Nielsen touches on most of the patterns of reactions which *Holocaust* has elicited. One of the first mechanisms to avoid confrontation of guilt was for the Germans to feel that they, the survivors, were in fact the innocent victims. This is clearly the emotional attitude of the wide audience of *Holocaust* and is most intense on the political right, Viewers' comments on the series concentrated on their own sufferings as they identified with both persecutor and persecuted. This insistence on being the true victims of fascism is also practiced by the Left, since the greatest criticism of *Holocaust* was that it did not portray the suffering of the labor movement as the main crime of the Nazis.

The second stage of post-war history, after denial of the tragedy and a feeling of victimization, brought the replacement of the Nazi father figure with the authority of the occupying powers. Here Mitscherlich-Nielsen cites the West German idealization of the United States model, which was only shaken by the disappointment of the Vietnam War. This attachment to the U.S. must also be traced to the Left's reactions. When anti-American sentiment flared among West German youth, few asked how much of it was really directed against their parents' generation and the U.S.-inspired institutions of their own country. This uncritical formula has also been applied to *Holocaust*. Leftists dismissed it with contempt because of its origins in American entertainment television, and the mass audience unhesitatingly accepted it for the same reason.,

Mitscherlich-Nielsen makes a further point that the major substitute for independent political imagination in West Germany has been the consumer society. Traditional German ideals and values have become so emotionally tainted that the public finds it easier to devote its energies to unprecedented production and consumption — *das Wirtschaftswunder*. *Holocaust* fits into this mechanism well, since it neatly packages its version of history, gives the tragic processes a name, isolates them in a historical period that is both unreal and insulated in the past, and places it on the market for all to consume. Most unsettling about the inability to mourn as the source of political stagnation in West Germany is the extent to which the Left has participated in it — even against its own interests.

While the West German conservatives project their identification onto the United States, Israel and anti-communists everywhere, the Left practices the inverse, attacking the U.S. and Israel and defending the socialist states as if by reflex, rather than pursuing these impulses to their roots at home. The Left in West Germany has constantly,

6. The one work she does mention as an attempt to deal with the Nazi legacy in an emotionally honest way is Syberberg's *Our Hitler, a Film Legacy from Germany*.

7. *Im Kreuzfeuer...*, p. 207.

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wilfully, almost masochistically, taken the attitude of the *enemy*, as the same old target for conservatives and German nationalists. By refusing to participate in the *Holocaust* reception, the Left provides the conservative *Holocaust* viewer with the added satisfaction of being anti-leftist merely by consuming the product. By acting unthinkingly as the *enemy* of the consumer masses, the Left merely attests to the uselessness of thinking or listening.

It is as if there is a complex emotional basis for the Left's compliance with its own exclusion from the rest of West German society. By acting as if nothing had changed in its roles, opportunities and failures, the Left assures itself and its opponents that there will be no surprises. By operating on the basis of a stagnant view of historical struggles, leftists spare themselves questions to which they do not know the answers. Answering them may inadvertently help the enemy. Whatever the methods of fascism in the past or whatever groups perpetuate fascist ideology in the present, the real question is how contemporary parliamentary democracies are able to overcome their crises and retain the loyalty of their citizens without resorting to anti-Semitism, mass party rallies, concentration camps; and "blood and soil" rhetoric. Given the subtleties of the mass media, international economic systems and the transformation of mass politics, the Left's self-definition must also be subjected to question. To avoid all this, the Left keeps fighting the battles of the 1930s and perpetuates the emotional paralysis of West German politics. It behaves as if nothing had changed, merely to avoid accepting part of the guilt for that change, and this reinforces the same behavior in the rest of society. Meanwhile, things have changed, but not to the advantage of the Left or of political freedom.

Finally, although the Left includes some of the much-hated "extremists" the West German government fears so much, it, too, is paralyzed with fear of extremes, fear of change, fear of an emotional confrontation with the past. Through this fear of emotion, the Left has abandoned German history to the forces of conservatism. This is the West German "melancholy" which Guattari has described.[8] The mass media make it extremely difficult for the Left to form a differentiated reaction to the "packaged" depiction of reality. Yet, it is clear that by remaining aloof from the realities of West German mass culture, the Left has allowed conservatism to occupy the void of emotional identification.

West Germany is today the most conservative and repressive society in Western Europe. A former Nazi Party member, Carl Carstens, is *Bundespräsident*. The unspeakable has occurred with the candidacy of Franz-Josef Strauss for chancellor. Strauss knows very well what "concept of history" he will present to West Germans as a model for their emotional identification. If leftists are too horrified by this prospect of German patriotism to provide an alternative, they may well be obliged to stand aside and watch, as they were with *Holocaust*. The citizens of the most powerful state Germany has ever produced will not be inspired by humility, weakness or even innocence, but by power and the satisfying guilt of power abused yet regained.

8. "Comme un écho de la mélancolie collective," in *Les Temps Modernes*, Nos. 396-397 (July-August 1979), pp. 413-420.

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OUR HITLER

by Christian Zimmer*

No events are incapable of being retold, but there are cases where narration betrays reality and the memory of those who lived through what they themselves called "unspeakable." In such cases, the only legitimate and faithful truth is the cry. Syberberg's thesis is correct: the problem no longer belongs to narrative historians, since it is necessary to scream in order to continue living. Being believed or not no longer matters, the difference has become meaningless.

Narrative always involves a little of the hopes of the historian: is not narrative an explanation and a rationalization of the unthinkable? Is it not a standardization of insanity? Does not narrative always excuse? By obliterating the irrational, history can be made to serve any end. Historical narrative supposes that there is nothing outside the

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*This review first appeared in *Les Temps Modernes,* October-November 1978. Translated by William F. Hamilton. Syberberg's Hitler film is the product of more than six years of sustained analysis of modern German history. The project began with *Ludwig — Requiem for a Virgin King* (1972), which was followed by *Karl May* (1974) and *The Confessions of Winifred Wagner* (1975). This latest offering is some seven hours long and was filmed in four weeks at Bavaria Studios in Munich with the modest budget of 1 million marks, supplied in part by West German television and the government of West Germany. The initial Cannes screening of excerpts in 1977 was boycotted by German film critics. Syberberg responded with a vitriolic polemic attacking the artistic climate in Germany and withdrew from the planned Berlin film festival. The movie premiered at the London Film Festival in November 1977 under the title *Hitler — A Film from Germany,* and it has been running in Paris under its subtitle, *Hitler parmis Nous.* American showings began in Berkeley in July 1979 under the title *Our Hitler.*

The movie is filmed on a single stage which is made to accommodate some 22 self-contained "chapters" linked by various auditory and visual symbols. Each chapter is introduced by a moderator, and each set is composed of historical "debris" and "remnants." pictures and images are projected onto a massive 27 x 36 foot cyclorama behind the stage through the use of slides reflected onto the camera lines. Stage props, buildings, balconies, etc., are constructed against and merge into this background. The effect is a bizarre, disquieting surreal combination of reality, image and symbol that is both pathetic and derisory. In addition to the actors, who appear in various costumes and masks, the set is populated with dummies and mannequins. To maximize the distance and alienation of the viewer, Syberberg not only mocks Hitler *et al.,* but the moviegoer as well. Wasn't Nazism itself a staged phenomenon?

The critical response to the movie has either misunderstood or failed to comprehend the central problem of discussing European fascism. The very process of historical description and denunciation — regardless of the intentions of the author — inevitably produces unwarranted rationalization (and justification) and illusory grandeur. The more passionate the denunciation, the greater, more mysterious and pathologically attractive the villainy begins to seem. Zimmer raises the question of whether one can *write* about the Third Reich by emphasizing that the virtue of Syberberg's employment of cinematographic techniques is that it allows him to demystify history. The dynamic illusion created by narration modelled on the linear, directional, and rationalizing character of the written word is absent in Syberberg's film. What remains, to use Hannah Arendt's expression, is the banality of evil.

Syberberg's movie questions Western civilization as a whole. Zimmer underlines the fact that totalitarian politics do not emerge full-blown from the head of some monstrous leader; rather, its cultural roots have been nurtured for centuries in our religious conceptions. Both fascism and religion rely on a set of sacred symbols and mythology that occludes the concrete. Fascism was the heir to religious notions of sacrifice, purity, and final destiny, which it translated into the political realm. Zimmer's parallel is troubling because it questions the innocence of our cultural heritage so smugly, sentimentally, and hypocritically glorified and preserved in modern "democracies." We are living in dangerous times; as Syberberg has stated, "Hitler is *the* subject of our century and not merely for Germans." Hitler is in us, and one wonders how dormantly. — *William F. Hamilton*

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fluidity of time, the chain of cause and effect, and that the past is so homogeneous and coherent that it will still preserve its density and consistency despite being sliced to pieces. Nazism simply began here and finished there — that's all. Thus time assumes the image of space and mankind struggles to conquer its great, fundamental anguish with this analogy. This requires, however, the repression of indubitable, desperate truths: that there is no absolute beginining; beginnings are already endings; endings are already beginnings; and movement, modification of a simple state, is only immobility.[1]

Syberberg completely rejects narration; his film *Our Hitler* is a radical non-narration. As Jean-Pierre Faye[2] has noted, the film is made only of space[3] — a limited, closed and artificial space where the past is present as remnants and debris. It is a cinema not of documents and records but of vestiges, somewhat like *Nuit et Brouillard* of Renais, but Syberberg's vestiges are, so to speak, "deader" because nature is excluded. Documents still belong to congealed time and form the backbone of narration. More exactly, documents are the historian's guarantor of legitimacy and at the same time cannot stop him from falseness in his own constructions. Documents thus hold a very minor place, an *insignificant* (in both senses of the word) place in *Our Hitler*. Nor is this minor role crucial. Documents are poorly exploited and their possibilities badly utilized. They are squandered and only employed so as to appear futile, vain and useless. Documentary records can portray only poorly and inopportunely, if at all. Why?

The problem of narration converges here with the problem of the representation of power. Syberberg certainly does not wish to offer an image of power, but historical events always convey the sense of power and stimulate fascination and excitement. Syberberg has remarked, "It isn't difficult to excite people with either good or evil." This is what the moviegoer wants first of all. It is enough that this power belongs to the past, that it is defeated and abolished for it to be tuiltlessly admired in purely aesthetic contemplation. No wonder that today's theater-clubs applaud *Triumph of the Will*.

The remnants and debris of Syberberg's cinema of vestiges have none of the prestige that clings to ruins. Architecture that outlasts power no longer expresses that power, and thus becomes pure culture, innocent by definition. Moreover, the notion of "ruin" always has an ideological connotation. First, the ruin consecrates the creative spirit's resistance against the vicissitudes of history. It is the incarnation of eternity. Second, lacking functional utility, it accedes to a purified and sublime region and then provides an ideal mirror for the sacred image of the father and ancestor. No doubt this is the source of M. Pierre de Boisdeffre's indignant and senseless remarks about the criminal attack on Versailles, that image of paternal authority.[4]

For Syberberg, ruins and architectural vestiges do not exist as such. They are replaced by mediocre photographic enlargements, painted screens, and too-vivid

1. The problem of immobility and change, essence and existence is both philosophical and political. In politics, change can have no other end than stability. But philosophically, there is no end to change. If all is change, everything is immobile. The only meaning of change is life itself. Yet in politics, can one change in order to live? Politics would become a change against live...and living would cease to be an end in itself. Therefore, one lives and changes in order to find another *state* (or another *State*), and thus to substitute for life something besides itself, that is to say, a new immobility.

2. "Le Troisième Faust," *Le Monde*, July 23, 1978.

3. By repudiating narration and congealing time in space, Syberberg has stripped the history of Hitlerism of all the epic glamour which is the natural product of sublimation of eventful times. But the epic is always two-sided and paradoxical: heroic and grotesque at once. Thus, the epic glamour of Nazism has not been challenged by photographic documents ridiculing Hitler and other dignitaries of the Third Reich — for example, the Führer dancing a sort of jig at the signing of the armistice.

4. "Pourquoi Versailles?" *Le Monde*, July 2-3, 1978.

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"transparencies." Even nature itself is treated in this manner, and the debris scattered in its space is ludicrous, insignificant, and without interest (the forest is faked but the vegetable mold on the garden table is real). There is no longer any trace of power in this trash. Even the characters' movements in this space are overtly faked: an actor portrays walking, but it is the transparency that moves. Space is rigged, and its narrowness is made apparent. It is a theatrical space, and commentaries on Syberberg's images show the degree to which this has been misunderstood. There is nothing lyric or visionary in his images and nothing that resembles a hallucinated creation. Rather, the movie is a deliberate rejection of all ability to fascinate, of all picturesqueness which is not ludicrous. Syberberg exhausts all the signifying potential of documents in order to leave nothing but shadows, phantoms present in their own background. This is an exasperated Brechtism, a device for maximum distancing.

Is *Our Hitler* a theatrical film, then? Not quite, because the theater here is more or less deprived of its function of representation. Instead, the film is a pretext for displaying the non-narrative character of history. It refuses to represent the power which it questions, and thus it is ultimately a representation of the refusal to represent.

This refusal is fundamental because what it denounces is equally fundamental. The film is a denunciation not of Nazism, but of the image that haunts those who denounce it: that black, inverted grandeur, the hidden greatness of the fall and the abyss. Nazism becomes a Christian phantasm of Satan which, doubly negated, is precisely the image of God in this Manichaean obsession. *Our Hitler* is a frustrating film because it deprives us of the representation of a hated object: neither hatred nor secret fascination is possible. Evil's work is invisible and rarely recognized. It is the slow disintegration of a consciousness, of a personality renouncing little by little all its desires and all its reasons for life. Art invents myth and images in order to speak of this faceless evil: evil is much more easily perceived when it apes the good in some manner by presenting itself as an object of contemplation and thus possibly of imitation and example. Consider the impact of television on children. As shows are integrated into daily life, the feeling of prohibition attached to certain images is practically effaced. From the imitation of evil represented by the image it is a short step to the act which now appears as a simple realization and not a transgression. Without a real affective context, the image functions as a signal, as an elementary model of conduct, and the outline of a "social imperative." But this is only a hypothesis.

Syberberg's images are not simple reproductions because they constantly present *distance* and *exteriority* in relation to the viewer. This external quality is, moreover, frequently inscribed in an immediate and obvious image. The physical presence of a character with whom the viewer more or less identifies is accentuated and intensified *in proportion* to the remoteness and impossibility of the historical context which he evokes. Syberberg wants the viewer to experience the feeling of *break* between that which carries the trace on the screen as evidence of an unequestionable reality (an actor, a man, healthy, very real, a body of flesh and blood, a personality and an identity) and that which is only an *evocation* of the past, a work of the creative imagination, and a historical *fiction*. Realism is drafted into the service of distancing. A player's monologue tests the limits of the fiction which he embodies: he is filmed close up and slightly out of focus, in silhouette before painted screens, exposures, and enlargements.

Certain material presences, far from aiding the fiction, create this distance between the reality of the material and the imaginary character of the representation. For example, the vegetable mold on the garden table — an authentic table in a fictitious garden — where Peter Kern sits making sausage and speaks to us of his memories of Berghoff and the snow that fell during the story of Hitler's valet. Note that the snow has

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a double function, since it also evokes poetically and allusively the Nazi campaign in the USSR. Syberberg's whole purpose is to create in the viewer a sort of split and redoubled participation. The idea is to divide belief and, so to speak, to displace and short-circuit it. From such a perspective, all historical resemblances in the characters appear not only superfluous, but detrimental to the studied purpose of the film. These characters need only to be identified by a sign or a minimum signal. The character of Himmler reveals Syberberg's intentions. Interpreted by an actor who also takes the role of Hitler(we will later see for what purpose) Himmler is less believable than his masseur, who is entirely fictitious. Syberberg does not ask us to believe in Heinrich Himmler's presence on the canvas — not even as an effigy. He rather asks us to believe in the discourse of the actor whose physical presence, strongly underlined, solicits a belief of a different nature. Disassociation grounds participation.

His theater is thus a species of theater within the theater, a theater that never aims at identification, but which holds everything at a maximum distance. It is by recourse to this theater that Syberberg attempts to exorcise the temptation of grandeur. This aesthetic of the theater returns us to the culturally "inferior," "ignoble," or marginal. It is the art of stage-craft found in the cabaret, the coffee house, the music hall, the circus, the formalism of the 1920s Soviet avant-garde, the experimental theater, etc. In other words, it is an aesthetic dedicated to critique, to irony, to derision, to the expression of skepticism, to a nihilistic vision — and thus it is necessarily inappropriate for all representations of power and greatness. Syberberg fights grandeur in the literal and most material sense of the term by giving the marionnette as important a piece as the player. Granduer is negated both visually and concretely. The image exudes power as though it were a natural and essential attribute, while in truth its real function is to mask the inevitable force and violence which result from power. Force and violence dressed up in legitimacy are simply perceived as the natural appearance of *dynamism*. Syberberg endeavors to destroy this image of the dynamic by filling his film with mannequins. In sum, his theatricalization consists in shrinking and immobilizing.

The key to the film's aesthetic is the critique of this notion of grandeur. Grandeur is a vague, confused, frighteningly imprecise notion employed by totalitarian ideologies. Grandeur can be translated into social, cultural, moral and religious terms, but in political language it is more difficult. To promote the grandeur of a people is not to make them happy; on the contrary, grandeur dispenses with happiness. The association of grandeur with the public good puts dreams in the place of pain. Nevertheless, one can raise the question of the *competence* of power in matters of good fortune. Do certain individuals have the right to claim that they know better than the group itself what will be best for all? Even if they do know, have they the right to substitute their will for the collective inertia? How can their knowledge be preferred to the general ignorance, if it is true that only the masses possess the truth? But we know that this concept of "masses" may also be only a creation of power. Is not the man of the future, who takes charge of the destiny of a people, always dangerous by definition? There will be a price to pay for the simple reason that all certitude in power is already totalitarianism.

There is only one way of rendering power innocent: give it the most humble, modest task possible, namely, that of an administrator unobtrusively managing daily life. Politics *is* of the everyday. Would not competent daily management render useless the most ambitious plans for the future? The origin of these ambitious plans lies perhaps in the failures and inadequacies of daily administration; here grow the seeds of totalitarianism. If power wishes to perpetuate itself and avoid engendering an antagonistic violence that could over throw it, it must deny and go beyond itself through self-criticism and self-questioning. The only authentic grandeur that it can claim is the

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grandeur of renunciation: it must accord the maximum liberty — that is, power — to the individual. It must be given to the individual and not to the mass, since, as we have seen, the idea of mass is necessarily secondary to that of power. But grandeur is blind to itself, and this is something power cannot accept. Indeed, it has the appearance of mediocrity.

The liberty of the citizen barely survives in an atmosphere of grandeur (supposing that there truly is grandeur); even grandeur dreamed by power suffocates the citizen. It is, in a word, the first step toward totalitarianism. It is the wish to invest the political field — the real, daily, and concrete — with values that belong to the imagination and relate the individual to the unreal. Dictatorship is present as soon as power becomes involved in the imaginary, as soon as it wishes to direct and administer that which cannot be administered, as soon as it wishes to define an imaginary collective. A solicitous response to the individual's need for diversions or to the necessity of creating an art *for the people* is only an alibi. The individual, as well as the people, can only fully experience liberty in the spontaneity of creation.

At the root of totalitarianism lies a refusal of the real which is first of all a refusal of time and history. This refusal involves a denial of change, metamorphosis, and the impossibility of fixed identity, a denial of difficulty, impurity, and the non-rationality of novelty engendered in suffering, tears, blood, betrayals, and treason. Thus, Nazism desired a total historical rupture, a completely new beginning. This rupture, however, is only a chimera, a religious vision of history, because one can only break from what exists solidly: the act of rupture is not merely symbolic but leaves behind vestiges and debris as real and solid as that which has been destroyed. The survival of the past is, in sum, the condition of novelty. Jacques d'Hondt clearly explains this in his *Ideologie de la rupture*.[5] Once he is understood, it is very difficult to make Hegel the father of all totalitarianisms as some illusionists of Maurice Clavel's genre have tried to do. The dialectic is not a submission to the real, because there are two modes of refusal: confrontation or flight. And let us note that a refusal arising from the base and a refusal imposed from above are two very different things: liberating in the first case and enslaving in the second. Nor has the escape into metaphysics and refuge in transcendence ever been a protection from the crimes of totalitarianism. Has there not been as much if not more killing in the name of the Absolute and the Beyond than in the subjugation of humanity to temporal power? Is not mysticism the most frightening fanaticism because it has decided once and for all that the real is not valid? Doesn't intolerance begin with the obsession with purity?[6]

This obsession with purity is the heart of Nazi ideology. The obsession with a history without history endows the rupture with a radically new beginning. It also supposes a creation, a power, and a transcendent will to transform history into religion. This obsession can only manifest itself logically in relation to a product of history: in a society to found anew or in a man to create again. The expression "new man" and the promise to change humanity radically have an unpleasant smell of totalitarianism. Therefore, racism is an absolutely essential element of Nazi theory, and indeed fascism can scarcely be conceived without racism. The notion of racial purity holds a pre-eminent position in the conception of art and culture instituted by the Nazi regime and studied by Lionel Richard. Aesthetic criteria were practically replaced by ethnic criteria. This implies that there was indeed no Nazi aesthetic. In fact, leaving propaganda aside, Hitlerian art, in movies and painting for example, was marked only by a taste for the affected baroque, the roccoco, conventionalism, color prints, and a finicky and deceptive

5. Jacques d'Hondt, *L'idéologie de la rapture* (Paris, 1978), pp. 85-113.
6. Lionel Richard, *Le Nazisme et la culture* (Paris, 1978).

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realism. Such were the aesthetic criteria of the reign of William II, and Ludwig II of Bavaria has bequeathed us numerous examples of the same type. Interestingly, Ludwig II is present in Syberberg's *Our Hitler* as Hitler was present in Syberberg's *Le Requiem pour un roi vierge*, devoted to Ludwig II. One of the keys to the films' style is undoubtedly this "kitsch" character that is due less to the director's own inclinations than to his intention to restore an aesthetic climate.

But aesthetics is not the only issue here. It is crucial to understand that fascist art, a caricaturistic and derisory mimicking of grandeur, was destined to capture the confidence of the petty bourgeoisie — always the decisive element in political struggles. The petty bourgeois mentality, system of values, and vision of the world that fascist art reflects and interprets were the social categories of Hitler himself: for example, Hitler appreciated Franz Lehar more than Wagner and would view insipid American comedies for days on end. But ideology is always transmitted to the masses in a form that is both masking and entertaining, while, of course, the theoreticians had their own idea of Nazi grandeur. There were in Hitler's Germany, as in other times and places, two cultures: one for the people and another for the elite. As in the case of the USSR and China today, we legitimately suspect any state that claims to create an "art for the people" of reserving another and different art for the privileged. The art for the elite is always closer to what is traditionally called "culture" in the language of bourgeois idealism. Here the most troubling and grave observation is made: humanism has lied, "culture" and the sentiment of the beautiful do not humanize: the Nazi officers and functionaries who combined an extreme musical sensibility and refined literary taste with the coldest cruelty were not exceptions.[7] The brutes occupied the lower posts. If the socialist dream has ended in the Gulag, what is the end of centuries of Christian civilization. Highly proclaimed spirituality, untiring solicitude for the "soul," meditation on being and metaphysics, and reputed universal and imperishable great works, end in Auschwitz and Hiroshima. Doesn't this signal a terrible bankruptcy? The humanist George Steiner formulated this anguished question in *La Culture contre l'homme*.[8] And the Christian thinker René Girard has recently asked if our traditional Western culture does not posit a secret, indestructible and fundamental connection between the *text* (as the material base of our cultural system), the *sacred* and *violence*, a connection which our education masks, crushes and buries with all the weight of its authority in the deepest part of ourselves.[9] Those who deplore the disappearance of the sacred in our modern societies ought perhaps to question the object of their regret.

The belief in the sacred — charged with all the ambivalence which Freud has admirably defined[10] — permits the contemporary world to accept the horror in which it lives. This acceptance is for Steiner a veritable moral suicide.[11] The sacred transforms a reality of suffering, blood, cries and death into metaphysical evil and religious fantasies. The very old idea of a Holocaust, of sacrifice, of a necessary flowing of blood preceded religions, but is embodied in them. The essence of Christianity, in particular, is linked to this sacrificial notion and preserves violence as a law of existence in the name of order. Such sacrifice has taught man to consent to horror and repeatedly allowed its limits to

7. Aesthetic emotion is not, in spite of a sensation of purity that always gives joy, the contemplation of the work of art. This perfect sublimation which we have long heard of is discussed very clearly by Anthony Burgess and Stanley Kubrick in *A Clockwork Orange*. The heroes experience the same pleasure in listening to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony as they do in abandoning themselves to ultra-violence.

8. George Steiner, *La Culture contre l'homme* (Paris, 1973).

9. René Girard, *Des choses cachées depuis la fondation du monde* (Paris, 1978).

10. Sigmund Freud, *Totem et tabou* (Paris, 1975).

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 158-159.

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expand. Sacred violence, purifying violence, and the vital violence of salvation are all part of Nazi ideology. The idea of purity can also be located in the frame of sacrifice. National solidarity and ethnicity are sealed in blood. Distributed to the members of the tribe, the blood and body of the sacrificed animal weaves a sacred connection uniting the members of the community to one another and to God. An identity of substance is created through the ritual murder of the other. For Nazism, the substance is one: it is the race, the earth, the nation and the language. Is it even a substance? An expression frequently recurring in the discussions of the ideologues and leaders of the Third Reich is "the German soul." The protection of purity is the protection of the soul, and it is the mission shared by all, whether soldier, worker, artist or mother. The consequences are obvious: my duty is a double obligation to be prepared to kill and to be killed equally cheerfully.[12] In a 1929 speech, Hitler proclaimed that whoever lacked the strength to plunge his weapon into the heart of his adversary was not worthy to lead a people in the hard combat of its destiny.[13] Nazism at least had the merit of consistence in its fanaticism. There were not two fanaticisms, one for offering one's life and one for taking the life of another; both were the same. All fanaticism is religious, always participating in the same work of death and devoting itself to the same reign of violence. The glory and pride of the martyr plays into the hand of the torturer, and one is only a martyr when one is not an executioner.

Nazism is thus a religious phenomenon and a mass phenomenon. It matters little whether Hitler acceded to power in a democratic manner; Nazism surpasses the idea of political power. Totalitarianism wipes out the frontier between politics and religion, and the roots of Nazism must be found well below the degeneration of the Weimar Republic, the social situation of the epoch and the maneuvers of the bankers and industrialists in October 1931 to support the Nazis in order to call Hitler to the Chancellery.[14] The "metaphysical heat" of Germany, like the religiosity of the Chinese, holds perhaps a more important place than previously thought in the respective births of the Hitlerian and Maoist cults. In any event, according to André Glucksmann, today there is no longer an opposition between political power and religious power, but rather a harmonious division between the visible state and the invisible religion.[15] Nothing can better domesticate the citizen "than a religious conception of politics doubled by a political conception of religion."[16] In the last analysis, "all modern domination is... metaphysical."[17] Syberberg's film purposefully neglects the "material base" and economic explanation to insist on metaphysical and cultural foundations for Nazism. It is not coincidental that the seven-hour film opens and closes with an evocation of the Holy Grail. If the director occupies himself with alchemy, esoterism and astrology, it is wise to think twice before criticizing him. Nazism's hatred of rationalism is thus recalled by Syberberg. Ultimately, we return to the Nazi conception of history and man: obsessed with purity, authenticity and the incorruptibility of origins, with the starting point of absolute rupture. All non-mythic history is impure, since there are differences, changes, and *modifications*. "Myths, not psychology," said Goebbels. And among the myths of exhumed Nazism we find deliriums of "glacial cosmology" and the birth of a race of giants by the rejoining of the moon and sun. Religion reintroduces itself into politics. All thought of origins is religious; religiosity precedes the political and, perhaps, became political simply to survive. But this has not stopped man from

12. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
13. Lionel Richard, *op.cit.*, p. 21.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 106, note.
15. André Glucksmann, *Les maîtres penseurs* (Paris, 1977), p. 112.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 220.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 281.

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continuing to dream politically of religion in the projection of the Messiah as power and grandeur.

The efficacy of right totalitarianisms is built upon such confusions. Culture, religion and politics appear in fascism as three faces of the same truth. Here we must raise the problem of Wagner. He realized one of the Nazi ambitions in creating a theater "for the people" which exalted the German soul and the mythological treasures of the Germanic "race." Under Hitler, Bayreuth became by force of circumstance a center of religious and political celebration, as well as a piece of music. In contrast, the dominant trait of Verdi's music is that "easy," warm and essentially affective character safe from all suspicions of religiosity and pretentions of "grandeur," even though Verdi also wrote "for the people" and was not indifferent to politics. It is not Wagner's *music* that is fascist, however, and even the Wagnerian aesthetic of sympathetic magic and captivating force was not strictly fascist. Indeed, how much music could be accused of fascism in those broad terms? Xenakis has even made a troubling case of this in his study of the *Internationale*.[18] A work of art is neither a political act nor a political statement (in politics, after all, act and speech are equivalent). But the work of art is not foreign to ideology. On the contrary, art can only escape ideology by adopting a self-conscious political orientation. However, such escape is impossible except for militant art — and even this is questionable, because it would prevent any creation and therefore is opposed to a political attitude. Art is a synthetic vision and a non-analytic process within the concrete world.

The case of Wagner is not unusual: the artist is frequently innocent, but at the same time, never neutral. To the degree to which Wagner gives life to the mythological base which fascism sought, he cannot stop fascists from using his work and ideological orientation. The difference between the artist and the man of politics is that the artist does not create from a perspective of power. One cannot pretend that the Nazi interpretation of *Nibelungen* (a piece more mythological than political, its action surrounded by a cosmogenic and apocalyptic character just right for seducing those who deny history) is more correct or faithful to Wagner than the Marxist interpretation of Patrice Chéreau. The latter is probably more justified, in so far as Wagner was under the influence of Bakunin while composing the piece.[19] This does not mean that any interpretation is permitted; it is not possible, for example, to extract a revolutionary message from the Schopenhauerian pessimism of *Tristan!* It would undoubtedly be purely utopian for the artist to want the perfect coincidence of his intellectual and moral engagement as man and citizen with the *meaning* of his creation. But the meaning of his multifaceted creation is not fixed. Neither Nazism nor any totalitarianism could easily accept that instability. Such variability poses a problem for that artist faced by a power which he opposes unless his creative freedom is fettered to the point of obligatory silence or betrayal. It is his duty to avoid all ambiguity by demonstrating his opposition on a personal and civic level; in short, it is necessary for him, in unusual circumstances, to choose being a man and citizen before being an artist. Thus, those artists in Nazi Germany who wished to show themselves truly anti-fascist fled the country voluntarily rather than waiting to be forced to leave. Despite their protests, suspicion will always weigh on those who remained. Aesthetic creation cannot avoid being ambiguous, but its meaning can only be clarified by the strength of the author's political attitude.

The religious character of the totalitarian state explains its understanding of art by definition: there is no individual creation. The apparent diversity of art only recites and

18. Iannis Xenakis, *Problèmes de la musique moderne* (Paris, 1977).

19. The theses of George Bernard Shaw, recently republished in *Le Parfait wagnérien* (Paris, 1978), also confirm Chereau's interpretation.

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sings a single and *sacred* text of evidently immutable meaning, known in advance, and fixed once and for all. Moreover, it is not properly speaking the individual artist who creates but rather the community, the earth, the race, the blood, the collective soul. Expressionism is an affirmation of autonomy, of the uniqueness of the self, the rights of a personal and subjective vision, even including provocation; it was already a reaction to that aesthetic conception apparent in the German mentality before it was made official by Nazism. Further, the irrational — of which we are just beginning to discover the importance in human psychological dynamics — held a significant place in the affirmation of the ego. The Nazis were unable to listen to this irrationalism (for them a "degenerate art") since it was the expression of the individual and his autonomy and not that of the community.[20] The individually irrational was desacralized, pathologized, condemned without appeal, since it conflicted with the communal irrational which had been made an object of belief and worship.[21]

The denial of the autonomy of the individual is basically the denial of the autonomy of art, the demand that art say the same thing as politics. Why? In order to impose the sacred, intangible text and credo on the mass and nation. Two other myths are attached to the myth of the *Text*, which is at the base of all revealed religions; that of writing in so far as it is a sacred activity, and that of the Voice, the Word, and the Speech which carries the Truth. With regard to an oral tradition as opposed to a "modern" written memory, Jean Pouillon has said: "Perhaps fanaticism comes from writing."[22] As for Syberberg, he does not fail to remind us that Hitler was compared to Moses carrying the Twelve Tablets. If his film intoxicates us with speeches and drowns us in a verbal wave — as many as three sound tracks are sometimes superimposed to the neglect of the visual image — it is because the word is one of the most effective arms of totalitarianism. The voice of the leader becomes pure charisma and is no longer a mere speaking but the expression of a superhuman will from beyond. It is inspired speech whose sense disappears behind the effect of sacred terror. The irrational triumphs: removed from intellectual reflection and analysis, speech changes into mystic power in the same way that writing ennobles, purifies, and sublimates time by fixing it as an epic. The voice is endowed by the religious spirit with a power that transcends its instrumentality. Jean-Louis Baudry holds that the voice itself somehow fosters an astonished respect because voice is not as easy to grasp in the play of illusions as the body or its image.[23] Evidently, Baudry is thinking of cinema, where sound frequently has more *presence* than the picture image. It is the evocative power of poetry — and through this the ability to incite — that resides in the voice separated from the body: as if the voice is the very

20. Totalitarian regimes prefer the athlete to the artist. First, the athlete is more disciplined and the athletic organization recalls a military organization. Also the body, compared to the illogical, complex spirit, never deceives, even when it fails. The body's weaknesses and defeats have a rational explanation. Accordingly, the athletic exploit has a clear, unequivocal signification — which the artistic "exploit" never has. The athlete can attain the purity and unity of substance which the Nazis dreamed of because it is the body which commands, simply and without duplicity. The soul models itself on the body because physical striving is an asceticism, a moral law that can serve as a referent for all of existence. It is a morality of records.

21. Fernand de Brinon wrote in *La Revue de Paris*, Oct. 15, 1937: "It is easy to hold that the Nuremberg Congress is the annual synod of the Hitlerian religion. Dogmas are defined there, and encyclicals advanced. The Nazi does not hide from seeing his faith represented as a religious movement. He is a believer, an apostle, and a fanatic.... Everywhere at Nuremberg this year one finds a stamp showing a standing Führer speaking before a table around which are seated his ecstatic companions. The caption reads: 'In the beginning was the Word.' This is an image from a prayer book." Cited by Lionel Richard, *op.cit.*, p. 157, note.

22. Jean Puillon, *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*, in "Memoires," *Nouvelle Revue de Psychanalyse*, 11 (Spring 1977).

23. Jean-Louis Bandry, *L'Effet-cinéma* (Paris, 1978), p. 34.

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incarnation of the person and individual soul that lives in an anonymous and fragile body. The voice comes to haunt the material world as the truth comes to haunt the world of deceptive appearances.

Following Rousseau and Fourier, Jacques d'Hondt reminds us that barbarism is at the heart of civilization.[24] We can also say that barbarism is at the heart of the state. Syberberg takes us still further: fascism is latent in democracy and there is in each of us a little sleeping Hitler. Hitler is among us; he is "in the air." Therefore, in the film, there are multiple incarnations of the mocking Führer, with each actor wearing various masks including ones of Hitler.

Finally, what is to be done? First, a rigorous and patient study must be made of the concrete forms of modern power. Economic laws carry in themselves murder and blood as surely as the dialectic bears the premise of the Gulag. More attention should also be paid to the lessons of primitive societies, as Pierre Clastre discusses them in *Society against the State*. Primitive society is not a society without power, according to Xavier Delcourt, who cites Clastres: "the place of the chief is quite occupied, but the indebtedness of the chief to the rest of society is inextinguishable. If the leader wishes to preserve his prestige, not his power, the debt cannot be repaid. Consequently, the chief does not exercise power. At best, one turns one's back on the chief who truly wishes to play chief, at worst one kills him. It is, of course, a real debt. Forced to distribute his wealth to the group to preserve his prestige, the leader is the only one exploited without accumulating any power. Communal ownership is acquired at the price of subjugating the leader to his desire for prestige, and it is surely the tribe that remains the custodian of power exercised against the chief."[25]

24. Jacques d'Hondt, *op.cit.*, p. 71.
25. Xavier Delcourt, "La volonté d'une société libre," *Le Monde*, Aug. 12, 1978.

THE OHIO CONFERENCE ON POLITICAL CINEMA

by Nancy Wood

The 1979 Ohio University Film Conference on Political Cinema held April 25-29 in Athens, Ohio, raised important theoretical and methodological issues for radical film theory. The following schematic summary of the conference sessions, while not exhausting the range and complexity of these issues, may serve to identify a number of current perspectives on political cinema.

The opening panel on European Political Filmmaking examined politically significant films. Speaking on Italian cinema during fascism, John Rowe argued that, despite Mussolini's Censor Board, the production of anti-fascist films, whose latent form and content were subversive to fascist ideology and supportive of socialist themes, continued. Roberto Rossellini was cited as one such filmmaker; his work's framing and editing strategy implicitly contradicted tenets of fascism. Rowe, however, located Rossellini's political subversiveness primarily on an interpretation of their latent content which he called "political parables" and which he said foreshadowed the imminent collapse of fascist rule and the birth of a new social order. Though he vindicated Rossellini's motives for making films that conformed to Censor Board dictates, Rowe

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failed to provide an adequate framework to test these claims. In fact, his adherence to a rigid form-content dichotomy led him to an apparent contradiction: Italian audiences armed with the insights of radical thought may have dissected and probed Rossellini's films and discovered the progressive political themes, but many spectators without a developed political consciousness obviously would have missed these anti-fascist messages intended for them. Rowe might have been better equipped to account for this paradoxical audience reception had he devoted more attention to the "form-in-content" of Rossellini's films and the possible reception this structuring permitted.

In this respect, Lucy Fisher's treatment of Fritz Lang's *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse* (1939) provided a useful corrective. Raising the problem of "the politics of narrative style," Fisher challenged Siegfried Kracauer's claim that *Dr. Mabuse* was an anti-authoritarian allegory anticipating Hitler's reign of terror. With the aid of associative editing, iconography and off-screen sound, Lang had invested narrative method with an authorial power and directorial presence whose manipulative potential, Fisher argued, might itself disclose a suspect political view.

Julia Kristeva's work on the repression of "the feminine dimension" in patriarchal culture formed the basis of Deborah Linderman's analysis of Carl Dreyer's *The Passion of Joan D'Arc* (1928). Kristeva had noted, in *About Chinese Women*, that within capitalism, the feminine dimension "remains on the side of the threshold of repression, voice stilled, body mute, always foreign to the social order." For Linderman, this is precisely the suppressed problematic in the historical trial presented by Dreyer. He conflates the Christian diegesis of the film — the condemnation of Joan for her transgression against church hierarchy — with Joan's unfeminine heresy. An analysis of the film's successive frames is used by Linderman to convincingly dispute the film's ostensible unity. Linderman argues instead for a "heterogeneous text," rife with uncodable material.

The theoretical difficulties of mapping out the contours of political cinema were highlighted during the feminist panel. Largely due to the importation of French and British film theory to North America in recent years (via journals such as *Cahiers du Cinéma, Cinéthique*, and *Screen*), traditional criticism based on a form-content dichotomy has declined. Borrowed from the writings of Roland Barthes, Jacques Lacan and Christian Metz, the new approach treats film not as a discrete object, but as a site for textual operations that produce meaning through their particular signifying activity. Feminist film critics have participated in this reformulation in order to analyze dimensions of the cinematic representation of women which cannot be accounted for by a methodology focusing on roles and stereotypes. They have attempted to expose the psycho-sexual dynamics which popular cinema harnesses to structure women in film texts, and thereby tapping the spectator's desires and fears. In this panel, Jim McLaughlin analyzed George Cukor's musical *Les Girls* (1957), examining the film's use of language and iconography to represent women as fundamentally Other, as both the 'obscure object of desire' and the symbol of the male's deepest castration fears.

If a feminist method of 'reading' films is rapidly coming of age, the emergence of a distinctly feminist cinema appears less likely. By the very terms of feminist criticism, feminist film practice would require more than injecting feminist content into traditional forms, especially since forms are already suspected of speaking the language of patriarchal imagery. B. Ruby Rich described the feminist filmmaker's task as one of establishing a relation between a film's aesthetic and political ideology. She cited the films of French feminist Chantal Ackerman as exemplary in this respect. In her acclaimed *Jeanne Dielman* (1975), Ackerman chronicles three days in the life of a

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widowed Brussels housewife, who is both a mother and a prostitute. The film's detailed observation of household routine is done in such a way as to set up a correspondence between women's domestic labor and the film's narrative pace. Rich saw Ackerman's use of long and medium shots as an instance of a refusal to violate a woman's body and space, in contrast to popular cinema's constant use of zooms and close-ups. Rich thought that Ackerman's formal devices and the emerging mode of feminist analysis were laying the groundwork for a feminist cinematic vocabulary. The idea that a distinctly "feminist aesthetic" was developing raised considerable controversy among conference participants although lack of time prevented its elaboration. Confusion seemed to derive from a misunderstanding of what femininist artistic practice could consist in.

In the session "Reading Political Films," Peter D'Agostino discussed Antonioni's film on China, *Chung Kuo*. Antonioni had attempted a sympathetic portrayal of China, but when the film was shown to Chinese authorities, it provoked hostile reactions and was considered an offense to the Chinese people. D'Agostino presented a video of particular sequences to which the Chinese objected, followed by parts of the text in the *Peking Review* in which the authorities expressed the reasons for their reaction. This, in turn, raised a number of complex issues ranging from the aggression of image-taking to the interpretation of the Chinese text. However, for politically committed filmmakers, Antonioni's film specifically raised the problem of the "coding" practices of the documentary or ethnographic film. The reaction of the Chinese to the film's camera angles, "candid" shots, use of close-ups, etc., serves to remind Westerners that "reality" is mediated by cultural codes of viewing and transformed through the application of cinematic codes. The relation question of the techno-ideological base of the cinematic apparatus is increasingly occupying radical film theory. In particular, French theorists (Baudry, Oudart) have argued that film technology is itself modeled on viewing conventions derived from the monocular perspective developed in the Renaissance. Thus, the avowed scientific neutrality of film's technological base is highly ideological.

The panel on Third World films was supplemented by screenings of films from Africa, Cuba and Latin America. Julianne Burton focused on post-revolutionary film-making in Cuba, where the state has heavily financed film production and stressed its revolutionary potential, while clinging to a policy that tends to confine the artist's critical role to pre-revolutionary situations. With reference to four Cuban features (*Death of a Bureaucrat, Memories of Underdevelopment*, and *The Last Supper* by Tomas Gutierrez Alea, and *One Way or Another* by Sara Gomez), Burton argued that, despite such official restrictions, the "limits of critical tolerance" are still quite far-reaching. *Death of a Bureaucrat* was particularly succinct in its unequivocal attack on bureaucratic rationality (whether capitalist or state socialist) and in understanding the desperate lengths to which it drives the frustrated individual. Nevertheless, the state's ambivalence necessarily invites doubt about the ability of Cuban filmmakers to continue challenging unfreedom without eventually encountering censorship.

A provocative contrast to the preceding discussion was offered by Marcia Landy's and William Van Wert's respective examinations of the films of Senegalese director Ousmane Sembene, since Sembene holds that the state and artists are always in tension. The critical thrust of Sembene's most recent work, *Ceddo*, is to trace the domination of the indigenous African population by imperialism, religion, *and* state structures. Though Islam represents for Sembene the current threat to African liberation, the film invests in women the power for overthrowing its domination. Both discussants regarded Sembene's use of a blend of African oral tradition and modern narrative conventions and his stress on the importance of the control of language as indicating an emerging

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radical film style appropriate to the historical needs of that country's oppressed people.

In the panel devoted to Politics and the American Cinema, Aaron Lipstadt discussed Roger Corman's enterprise, New World Pictures, which produces exploitation films bound only to the principle of low outlay and fast pay-offs. Freedom from the constraints of the Hollywood production system enjoyed by exploitation films could have fostered the expression of counter-ideologies and anti-systematic values. However, Lipstadt had little difficulty persuading conference participants that, since these films are largely reactive and lack sustained political analysis, their subversive potential is actually quite limited.

An inveterate fan of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, Pamela Falkenberg drew upon innumerable screenings (from Des Moines, Iowa, to Athens, Ohio, where *TRHPS* premiered that very week) to disprove the thesis of *Screen*'s Stephen Heath that the ideological construction of the film text "fixes" the spectator-film relation. Falkenberg witnessed divergent responses to *TRHPS* leading her to challenge the unified spectator posited by Heath. In light of both the interpretative capacities of the spectator and the heterogeneity of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* as text, the distinction between a radical vs. conventional signifying practice dissolved.

Film has developed its own particular narrative codes. Recent film theory has attempted to establish the relationship between these narrative forms and political-ideological ends. In the final panel, Nick Browne addressed this problem in relation to Frank Capra's *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* (1939). Like most directors of this "classical" period, Capra recognized the rhetorical possibilities of the film medium and exploited these to create a political constituency sympathetic to his moral and political views. However, apart from the film's ostensible concern with violations of the individual's right to speak, another rhetorical strategy emerges when the text is given a symptomatic reading: the film *produces* a spectator through the film's narrative trajectory itself. Browne argued that the narrative's "ideal" project fosters spectator identification with the film's protagonist whose own struggle is essentially an Oedipal one — the protagonist's coming into manhood by reconciling external political authority with his internalized authority. Thus, to the extent that it is successful, the narrative of *Mr. Smith* reproduces in the spectator certain psychic prerequisites for acquiescence to political domination.

The conference ended without the extended discussion that was called for by the controversial nature of each session. In fact, it was the general absence of sustained discussion throughout the conference that tended to foster an atmosphere of "critical tolerance," beneath which there lurked quite profound political and methodological differences. Perhaps these might have emerged had the conference placed greater emphasis on what the editors of *Cine-tracts* recently identified as "the crisis of political-militant film," i.e., the recognition that no radical film practice can escape the inherent ambiguities and contraditions of the representational process.

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MORE NOTES FROM A PLANNING OFFICE

by Ranko Ban

Indeed, in the socialist countries the old gods have been humanized, brought down to earth, as it were. The cult of personality, however monstrous, is the first step on a long road. Most of the qualities of the fallen gods have been attributed to the illustrious leaders, the kings of fallen heavens. And who can deny that this is humanization as well?

Here we can see some advantages of having a pantheistic religion as a base. That is an advantage of socialism in the Third World, where monotheism had not yet penetrated.

August 15, 1978

Addendum

There is a beautiful passage in Marcuse's book on *Soviet Marxism* along the lines of the above rationalization, no matter how cynical and bitter. In the chapter dedicated to the externalization of values in Soviet ethics he writes: "Soviet ethics. . . contains a 'safety valve': the image of the future seems to perform a function corresponding to that of the transcendental elements in Western ethics — in this image we seem to have a real Soviet substitute for religion. However, there is an essential difference from which Soviet ethics derives much of its appeal. The transcendental goal in Soviet ethics is a historical one, and the road to its attainment a historical process — the result of a concrete social and political development. Final human fulfillment and gratification are not oriented on the 'inner self' or the hereafter, but on the 'next stage' of the actual development of society. And the truth of this conception is to be not a matter of faith, but a matter of scientific analysis and reason — of necessity."[1]

However, the carrot is real, but the stick is more real, to paraphrase Orwell. The heaven has come down to earth, but it remains equally distant as before. The future, described in rational terms provided by planning, remains the future. Faith remains faith, although it presents itself as the faith in reason. And reason has always inspired faith with a little help from its friend — the stick. And finally, the stick has always been in the hands of our leaders, the fallen gods.

Now, Marcuse acknowledges the possibility of misuse here, as he continues: "Unquestionably, this official argument for Soviet ethics serves well to justify a repressive regime which may use it only as an ideological veil for the perpetuation of the present state. However, what holds true for the Soviet use of Marxism in general may also be applied to its ethical philosophy: once it has become an essential part of the physical and behavioral structure of the individuals, once it has become a factor of social cohesion and interaction, it assumes a momentum of its own, and moves under its own weight. Only as such a factor, not as an objective of the Soviet leadership, is Soviet ethics considered in the context of this study." The first part is unquestionable indeed, while the second part hinges on an interpretation of reason that requires serious re-examination. Outside the context of *rational discourse*, which further implies domination-free communication, the concept of reason is null and void. For we must always ask — whose reason? Reason that excludes discourse is by necessity merely a rationalization. Marxism by itself does not secure the realization of reason. In the hands of those who wield power, Marxism is an instrument only, a stick.

July 1, 1979

1. Herbert Marcuse, *Soviet Marxism: A Critical Analysis* (London, 1971), p. 179.

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Awaiting a Fresh Start

The daily tasks of clerkdom, slowly, very slowly, turn my feeble mind into a *tabula rasa,* the supposed origin. *Teadium vitae* as a precondition for a new life, for a fresh start... An optimistic conclusion, as it were. Waiting for a writing god with a touch of humor (for gods do not like to be mocked). Origin and destination transposed.

April 2, 1979

Pia Fraus

The rationalists usually do not understand, and often do not want to understand, that a well-reasoned argument attracts or repels many people not because they understand it, or because they do not understand it, precisely because it is a well-reasoned argument. Many elegant flights of logic exist just to fill time, as the face of a caryatid on the 11th floor is there just to fill space. Her face is a part of the ornament that is not expected to be looked at, although it is supposed to be seen. The aesthetics of reason...

May 17, 1979

Ornamentum Baculinum

It is the custom in many socialist countries to append Marxist introductions to otherwise positivist treatises. This is the result of a compromise between the representatives of Politics and Science. The ornament is accepted under one condition: it must not penetrate the substance of the text. Generally speaking, this is a sane principle. Good ornament is always *applied* from without.

June 2, 1979

A Note on Crude and Thoughtless Communism

In the section entitled "Private Property and Communism" in *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,* Marx presents an inspired projection of the first steps of the communist society, which we would identify today with socialism. He writes: "The transcendence of self-estrangement follows the same course as self-estrangement. *Private property* is first considered only in its objective aspect — but nevertheless with labor as its essence. The form of existence is therefore *capital,* which is to be annulled "as such" (Proudhon). Or a *particular form* of labor — labor leveled down, parceled, and therefore unfree — is conceived as the source of private property's *perniciousness* and of its existence in estrangement from men." [2] He adds that "*communism* is the *positive* expression of annulled private property — at first as *universal* private property." Therefore: "In its first form [communism is] only a *generalization* and *consummation* of this relationship. As such it appears in a twofold form: on the one hand, the dominion of *material* property bulks so large that it wants to destroy *everything* which is not capable of being possessed by all as *private property.* It wants to do away *by force* with talent, etc. For it the sole purpose of life and existence is direct, physical *possession.* The task of the *laborer* is not done away with, but extended to all men. The relationship of private property persists as the relationship of the community to the world of things. Finally, this movement of opposing universal private property finds expression in the animal form of opposing to *marriage* (certainly a *form of exclusive private property*) the *community of women,* in which a woman becomes a piece of communal and common property. It may be said that this idea of the *community of women* gives away the *secret* of this as yet completely crude and thoughtless communism. Just as woman passes from marriage to general prostitution, so the entire world of wealth (that is, of man's objective

2. Karl Marx, *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (New York, 1964), p. 132.

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substance) passes from the relationship of exclusive marriage with the owner of private property to a state of universal prostitution with the community. In negating the personality of man in every sphere, this type of communism is really nothing but the logical expression of private property, which is its negation. General *envy* constituting itself as a power is the disguise in which *greed* re-establishes itself and satisfies itself, only in *another* way. The thought of every piece of private property — inherent in each piece as such — is *at least* turned against all *wealthier* private property in the form of envy and the urge to reduce things to a common level, so that this envy and urge even constitute the essence of competition. The crude communism is only the culmination of this envy and of this leveling-down proceeding from the preconceived minimum. It has a definite, *limited* standard. How little this annulment of private property is really an appropriation is in fact proved by the abstract negation of the entire world of culture and civilization, the regression to the *unnatural* simplicity of the *poor and undemanding* man who has not only failed to go beyond private property, but has not yet even reached it. The community is only a community of *labor,* and of equality of wages paid out by communal capital — the *community* as the universal capitalist. Both sides of the relationship are raised to an *imagined* universality — *labor* as a state in which every person is placed, and *capital* as the acknowledged universality and power of the community." And Marx concludes the first part of this extraordinary account of *socialism today* with the following words: "The first positive annulment of private property — *crude* communism — is thus merely one *form* in which the vileness of private property, which wants to set itself up as the *positive community, comes to the surface.*"

The Yugoslav Constitution of 1974 and the Law on Associated Labor of 1976, the so-called "small Constitution," express the ideas of crude communism as described by Marx. The generalization of labor, as a universal standard, reflects the generalization of envy and greed. "To each according to his work" is interpreted as "to each his own." This is the essence of the Law on Social Planning of 1976, as well. *Cuique suum* is the motto of all the recent legal reforms, which merely sanction the real social praxis. Everyone is pitted against everyone else in a general process of bargaining over the spoils of the production process, regulated *ex ante via* partial "social contracts" — the so-called self-management agreements and social compacts. The fetishism of labor, of crude physical labor understood physiocratically as *the* productive labor, is directly associated with the insatiable greed for material goods. Only those who *make* shall *have*...

The competition institutionalized through the market only hides the real essence of competition in this case — the competition of all the members of society for their share of the social product. The market only hides the fundamental causes of this competition. In the last analysis each individual is placed in the market context, each individual is isolated, dissociated, from the other equally envious and greedy individuals. Those who opt out of the strife are immediately suspect. The majority intuitively understands that those who are not satisfied with *having* actually want much more.

But, as Marx argues in his excellent account, this *is* a step forward. This *is* the beginning. Regardless of the manifold pettiness of such a milieu we cannot possibly deny or neglect this fact. The critique must go forward and consider further social development in the context of *this* presupposition. What critique must not overstep, however, are all the forms of domination superimposed upon this framework, like the domination of groups and strata that personify universalized labor and capital. Still, the foremost task of critical theory today is to dissolve the rosy images provided by the

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omnipresent ideology, where the ideals of communism can be realized in no time, practically on the heels of a victorious revolution. The long and arduous road "back" can only start then, however. And this has been systematically hidden.

July 13, 1979

Margaritas ante Porcos

A year or so ago a group of Swedish planners came to Yugoslavia with the task of learning something about the Yugoslav planning system. They visited a host of relevant institutions. I met them at a lecture at the Ljubljana Planning Office, delivered by the director of the office, who was recently booted up to a position in the Federal Administration. This pompous man talked very slowly, accentuating every word and trying very hard to make his poor English understandable. His habitually red face matched beautifully his habitually garish necktie. The *ex cathedra* lecture was reinforced by a large number of equally pompous diagrams, concocted by the lecturer, showing the main characteristics of the institutional framework underlying planning. I watched the earnest Swedes taking notes and listening very attentively. No signs of genuine interest, but no signs of boredom either. I was waiting for the discussion, if I may be permitted this word, for it was my task, together with a number of other professionals, to provide concrete illustrations from planning practice in support of the lecture. A difficult task, I knew. I felt both anger and pity for the guests, since they knew so little about the Yugoslav planning system. Or maybe they were just successful in keeping their faces straight and calm throughout the lecture. My ambivalent emotions reached a climax when I was unable to detect the slightest trace of discomfort among the Swedes when the pompous clown blurted out, accentuating every word, that the specificity of the Yugoslav political system was that it was neither a multi-party system, nor a one-party system, but a party-less system. In lieu of proof he said that we do not have a Communist Party any more, but a Communist League, and that this had been so since 1958, when a new Program was adopted. I almost choked, but the quiet guests did not notice anything. I do not believe that they even noticed the compelling beauty of this creative contribution to Marxist theory. The whole effort was pointless.

August 9, 1979

A Frivolous Note on a Short Conversation with an Ex-Soviet Citizen

Where there are official secrets, knowledge is serious.[3] Behind the secret there is something worth knowing. There is something legible, something which is hidden for precisely that reason. The transparency of social relations under crude socialism and repression go well together. What has been exposed by the revolution must therefore be openly hidden. A secret secret does not have to be a secret. An open secret means that there is something open that requires the status of a secret to remain a secret.

The mythical world of commodity fetishism has been blown apart, and the Potemkin villages have burst into the open. The props are dangling in plain daylight, and the shabby costumes of the old harlequins would entice an occasional smile, if only they were not armed.

But, repression defines the community that knows together with the community that must not know. Repression itself is transparent. It is open. It exposes to the extent that it hides. It signifies a potentiality precisely because it cannot but define the boundary. And the boundary defined is a boundary forsaken.

September 26, 1979

3. Cf. Paul Goodman, *Growing Up Absurd* (New York, 1960), p. 40: "Where there is official censorship it is a sign that speech is serious. Where there is none, it is pretty certain that the official spokesmen have all the loud-speakers."

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What Surrogate?

It is naive to complain *today* that the Party treats us as immature. This, the immaturity of the revolutionary subject, is the very essence of the Party as an institution. Had the revolutionary subject, the proletariat conscious of its historical tasks, been mature, there would be no Party today. And who can guarantee that this condition does not still prevail? We can only assume that, once in possession of power, the Party has defused the formation of a genuine revolutionary subject in order to reproduce itself. But this is a heroic assumption. Once the substitution has been made, once the surrogate for the proletariat has appeared on the historical scene, the classical argument cannot be applied any more. It has been forfeited once and for all.

October 8, 1979

Systematic Error and Vice Versa

So often we have heard that the Soviet orbit is harming the cause of socialism elsewhere, not to mention the orbit itself, by an uninterrupted stream of irksome "errors," that it has become curious indeed that hardly anyone has dared to advance a rather simple hypothesis that the very aim of these "errors" has been to prevent socialism from spreading outside of the stronghold. Why would such a long-term policy be rational? Because socialism in Europe, for example, the dream of Lenin and Trotsky, could not but provide a clear demonstration to those within the stronghold that there exists an alternative.

October 11, 1979

Conclusiuncula

Oskar Lange's maxim that "capitalist economics is about socialism, and socialist economics is about capitalism"[4] applies, quite naturally, to economic planning as well. There is one important consequence of this that went unnoticed, however. Economic planning is explicitly normative. *Nolens, volens* it is active, in the sense of the Eleventh Thesis on Feuerbach. It cannot hide behind the slogans of theory, and it cannot but address the question of social organization necessary in the process of planning itself, and, most importantly, in the process of plan implementation. Socialist economic planning, therefore, is an active force behind Lange's "capitalism." It is directly implicated in the process of socialist reconstruction of capitalism. It cannot be merely "about," but must be "for."

What can be concluded from this exercise? First, that it is meaningless to draw the ultimate consequences of witty maxims conceived with other purposes in mind. And second, that idle exercises may nevertheless lead to new and interesting problems, such as the following: If economic planning under socialism is indeed *for* capitalism, what is it *against*? I would like to suggest an answer: it is against itself. It is self-destructive from the moment that it becomes self-reflective. It is a grave-digger that refuses to obey. This conclusion provides the clue for understanding the practices of planning in most of the socialist countries, that ideologically tend to preclude self-reflection.

October 12, 1979

4. Quoted by P.J.D. Wiles, *Communist International Economics* (New York and Washington, 1968).

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BOOK REVIEWS:

Serge Bricianer. *Pannekoek and the Workers' Councils.* Translated by Malachy Carroll. St. Louis: Telos Press, 1978. 300 pages.

Anton Pannekoek. *Lenin as Philosopher.* London: Merlin Press, 1975. 132 pages.

D.A. Smart. *Pannekoek and Gorter's Marxism.* London: Pluto Press, 1978. 176 pages.

The theoretical contributions of Anton Pannekoek, Herman Gorter, Henriette Roland-Holst and other council communists belong to a particularly dynamic phase of Marxist development — the period between 1900 and 1930 — that was characterized by the search for a revolutionary alternative to, first, the prewar extremes of Social Democratic revisionism and anarcho-syndicalism and, second, to the bureaucratic statist degeneration of the Soviet system after 1920. In terms of its historical role, most notably in its double assault on orthodox Marxism and Leninism, the German-Dutch radical left occupies the same general terrain as the original "Western Marxist" current represented by Luxemburg, Korsch, Lukacs, Gramsci, and the early Frankfurt School. The issues raised and the tasks posed were essentially the same: how to comprehend the decline of European working-class movements in the 1920s, the collapse of Social Democracy, the rise of fascism, and (ultimately) the deformation of the Bolshevik Revolution — a theoretical undertaking that demanded nothing less than a thorough overhaul of a Marxism that had grown philosophically stale and politically inert. However, while interest in the major neo-Hegelian Marxists has been revived during the last ten or so years, the council theorists remain banished to intellectual and political obscurity; their legacy is still defined by Lenin's harsh and abusive, but inaccurate, critique of their "utopianism" in *Left-Wing Communism.* Today, familiarity with Pannekoek's work is limited to a few small enclaves of followers in Western Europe and the U.S. — enclaves so small that, by comparison, they make most Trotskyist and Maoist groups look like mass parties. The reasons for this obscurity are many: the political destruction of council movements, especially in their traditional form associated with the ideas of Pannekoek and Gorter; the remoteness of these struggles from the established Marxist organizations and tendencies; the inaccessibility of important written materials; and so forth. At an even deeper level, no doubt, has been the stubborn incapacity of a Marxist left long immersed in vanguardist and statist solutions to take seriously the themes of collective self-emancipation, direct democracy, and workers' control.

In this context, the very appearance of these volumes — in making available to English-language readers the bulk of Pannekoek's and Gorter's important writings spanning the years 1906 to 1950 — is a positive sign. Not that it will rescue the long-marginalized council tradition from political oblivion. But at least we now have a more enlightened theoretical basis upon which to situate council communism (in particular the thought of Pannekoek) within the evolution of Marxism and the European left. While a definitive historical treatment of council theory and practice has yet to appear, these books contain — aside from hundreds of pages of original materials — some useful (though on the whole not very critical) commentary by Paul Mattick and John Gerber as well as editors Bricianer and Smart.

Unfortunately, for those of us eager to discover new theoretical and strategic insights, a reading of *this* council literature reveals a legacy saddled with ambiguities and contradictions. There is no denying that the council theorists, looking beyond the illusions of a Marxism that seemed to express the needs of a more rationalized

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capitalism, did succeed in pointing to a new path of socialist transformation. A passage from Pannekoek's *Workers Councils*, written in 1950, summarizes this departure: "Socialism, as inherited from the 19th century, was the creed of a social mission for leaders and politicians: to transform capitalism into a system of state-directed economy without exploitation, producing abundance for all. It was a creed of class struggle for workers, the belief that by transferring government into the hands of these socialists they would assure their freedom. Why did it not happen? Because the casting of a secret vote was too insignificant an effort to count as real class struggle. Because the socialist politicians, alone in the entire capitalist fabric of society, stood against the immense power of the capitalist mastery of the production apparatus, with the working masses only looking on.... Now it is seen that socialism in the sense of state-directed planned economy means state capitalism, and that socialism in the sense of workers' emancipation is only possible in a new orientation. The new orientation of socialism is self-direction of production, self-direction of the class struggle, by means of workers' councils."[1] This "new orientation," however, was riddled with traditional premises and categories. A theory of self-conscious proletarian struggle, it lapsed at times into a rigid scientism and determinism; an effective critique of the statist instrumentalism that shaped both Social Democracy and Leninism, it failed to develop an alternative conception of the state upon which a viable political strategy could be built; a broad vision of democratic transformation, it embellished in the end an extreme productivist orientation that gave rise to a narrow workerism; an organic theory of historical development suggesting the need for a reconstruction of everyday life, it nonetheless resorted periodically to a catastrophic crisis scenario; the most sophisticated political theory of the postwar council movements, it vacillated between attachment to the old party and trade-union structures and romantic fatih in a solidary proletariat ready to make history. These ambiguities were not merely theoretical in the strict sense. They also reflected a historical situation in which the European left — presented with new opportunities — seemed destined to reproduce its well-entrenched institutional and ideological patterns.

Both Pannekoek (an astronomer by profession) and Gorter (a poet) were activists in the German and Dutch Social Democratic parties from roughly 1900 until the outbreak of World War I; Pannekoek taught Marxist theory in party schools and also worked with Karl Kautsky on *Neue Zeit*. As early as 1906, Pannekoek, Gorter and a small nucleus of left sympathizers began to challenge the increasingly myopic parliamentarism and trade unionism of the Second International, especially within the SPD. Stressing the buried theme of proletarian self-emancipation, they — along with Rosa Luxemburg and some others — inspired formation of a radical left tendency that rejected the orthodoxies of Bernstein and Kautsky and looked to spheres of political combat that might supersede conventional party maneuvers: the mass strike, popular insurrection, the factory committees and workers' councils. Motivated by the Russian Revolution of 1905, the radical left was driven by the wartime capitulation of Social Democracy, the crisis of European capitalism fueled by the war,

1. Bricianer, p. 299. All references to this and to the Smart volume are citations from the original sources (Pannekoek and, only occasionally, Gorter). It is necessary to clarify this point since in Bricianer there is a constant mixture of original passages and commentary by the editor. This structure often helps to situate the discussion, but it hinders assessment of the material. On the whole, the Bricianer volume is to be preferred since it is more extensive and because it supplies a theoretical and historical framework through its organization of chapters. The main value of the Smart collection is that it includes selections from Gorter that are not available elsewhere.

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and the subsequent rise of council movements in England, Germany, Hungary, Holland and Italy. Having divorced themselves from the Second International, the council leaders (which did *not* include Luxemburg, who remained faithful to the party form) re-emerged within the KAPD (the Communist Workers' Party of Germany) and then broke with the Comintern following its second Congress in 1919. When the council struggles lost their momentum after 1921, the radical left vanished as a cohesive force. But unlike Korsch and Gramsci who, in different ways, accommodated themselves to a party-based socialism in the wake of the postwar council defeats, Pannekoek maintained and even deepened his commitment to the "new orientation," persisting for nearly four decades as the voice most closely identified with the revolutionary council ideal.

Pannekoek's starting point was the critique of Social Democracy, which beneath its revolutionary self-conception he saw as paralyzed by irreversible contradictions from its very birth. He viewed the development of the SPD and other similar parties as organically linked to the early phases of capitalist expansion and, through their institutionalized presence in the political system, as embedded in the very logic of the bourgeois revolution. Such parties came to embody not the subversion of bourgeois civilization but rather its *extension* and rationalization, to the extent that they functioned to stabilize the existing state apparatus by reinforcing the norms of formal democracy, instigating limited social reforms, and integrating large sectors of the working class into the system. Thus: "In Germany, the development of the party form was subject to the particular conditions of the bourgeois revolution" and served, through its Marxist imagery, to achieve for the emergent proletariat a secure place within capitalism" (Bricianer, p. 57). Pannekoek saw in the "Bismarckian brand of state reformism" a great delusion, since while it created new political space for the SPD it also legitimated the party and neutralized it as an oppositional force (*ibid.*, p. 60). The growth of imperialism, which produced a militant nationalism within large sectors of the working class, helped to reinforce this logic. By 1908 — at about the time Luxemburg, Robert Michels, and Gustav Landauer were refining their own critiques of German Social Democracy — Pannekoek had concluded that the historic task of the SPD was to "reorganize capitalism on new foundations," on the assumption that the working class could through its parliamentary and trade-union strength eventually dominate the national state machinery. The reality, however, would be a new system of domination erected behind the "façade of socialism." Hence, "if one accepts the present Social Democratic plans, exploitation continues and the expropriation of industrial enterprises leads quite simply to a kind of state capitalism" at a time "when the proletariat, still awakening, has not yet gathered all its forces" (*ibid.*, p. 160). This deradicalizing process, however, could only unfold in a period of economic and political stability, whereas the war unleashed exactly the opposite — crisis and polarization — and thereby undermined the rationalist and evolutionist premises of Bernsteinian strategy.[2]

For his blatantly unorthodox thinking, Pannekoek found himself engaged in a head-on theoretical clash with Kautsky in 1912; writing in *Neue Zeit,* Kautsky

2. Pannekoek argued, along the lines of Michels, that Social Democracy "takes the form of a gigantic and powerful organization, almost a state within a state, with its own officials, finances, press, spiritual universe, and specific ideology (Marxism). By its general character, it is adapted to the pre-imperialist peaceful phase. The thousands of officials, secretaries, agitators, parliamentarians, theoreticians, and publicists — who already form a distinct caste, a group with very distinct interests — rule the organization on both the material and spiritual levels; and express its general character.... Their tranquil work, in conferences and committees, in offices and editorial rooms, is threatened by the storms of the imperialist era." Bricianer, p. 140.

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chastised the radical left for its presumed anarchistic indulgence of undisciplined mob politics and its lack of organizational focus. Pannekoek responded that Kautsky's single-minded parliamentarism, along with the fashionable equation of socialism with nationalization and state planning, led him into a theoretical and political impasse: preservation of bourgeois structures at all costs. For Pannekoek, it was more than a question of Kautsky's failure of imagination: "it is simply that our perspectives correspond to different stages in the development of organization, Kautsky's to the organization in its first flowering, ours to a more mature level of development" in which day-to-day struggles are effectively merged with long-range politics, in which a variety of forms of action (insurrectionary as well as legal) can be integrated into a total revolutionary process — all leading to the *dissolution* of the capitalist state and the construction of a new council system of authority (Bricianer, pp. 61, 65-67). Kautsky was far too preoccupied with organizational growth and survival, to the degree that his "theory and tactics represent an attempt to shield the whole bureaucratic apparatus from the risks of social revolution" (*ibid.*, p. 140). What emerges from Pannekoek's work is the attempt to move beyond Kautsky's simplistic choices — struggle within the bourgeois state versus chaotic and unstructured mass action — to a global strategy rooted in new forms of popular intervention and (ultimately) the unfolding of a revolutionary democratic state (the constituent elements of which remained vague).

The foundations of a new order, therefore, would have to be built outside of the large-scale Marxist parties and trade unions, for such organizations were already too institutionalized and their leaderships too committed to a bourgeois style of politics — and to preserving their own bureaucratic status within a stable, administered system of social relations — to ever be the locus of real democratic impulses. The best "strategy" for the workers' movement was ultimately what the proletariat itself could fashion by means of its own self-activity; all other "solutions" that delivered mass initiative over to "representatives" of one sort or another were illusory, for in Pannekoek's words, "The real forces of revolution lie elsewhere than in the tactics of parties and the policies of governments" (Smart, pp. 147-148). The logic of this deradicalization would be as true of the new Communist parties created in the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution as it was of the more explicitly reformist Social Democratic parties of the prewar period: "by recognizing the old methods of struggle and engaging in parliamentary activity and loyal opposition within the old trade unions, the communist parties in Western Europe will acquire a legal status, like social democracy before them, and in the face of this, the radical, revolutionary current will, see itself forced into a minority" (*ibid.*, p. 135). From Pannekoek's standpoint, party and trade-union leaders inevitably see demands and struggles that transcend immediate economic or political claims as dangerous — a form of "revolutionary romanticism." They must attempt to confine all activities to the sphere of bourgeois authority relations since this terrain, once occupied, reproduces its own class collaborationist dynamic.

But the militant hostility of council theorists toward all forms of party organization was tempered when it came to the unions, which they saw as performing a more dualistic role. On the one hand, Pannekoek argued that "the trade unions are the natural form of proletarian organization, and the direct manifestation of its social function — i.e., to act as vendor of the merchandise represented by work." They awaken class consciousness in the workers, instill a sense of political combat, break down old illusions, and help to generate discipline and feelings of solidarity: "Isolated until then, and still preserving through their lower middle-class origins the habit of

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acting in an individualistic way, the workers see themselves changed into new men with new habits, into men who feel closely united with their comrades as integral parts of a body animated by one and the same will" (Bricianer, pp. 99-102). On the other hand, "the trade unions are not the direct organ of the revolutionary class war, since their objective is not the overthrow of capitalism. On the contrary, they form a necessary element for the stability of a normal capitalist society." Moreover, insofar as "the success of mass movements depends upon their capacity for autonomous action" and popular initiative, "it is precisely these qualities...that are repressed and annihilated by trade-union discipline."[3]

A reading of these three volumes necessarily leads one to the conclusion that the simplistic picture of council communism as "abstentionist" — a notion long cherished by Leninists and social democrats alike — is totally fallacious. In this case, a historical critique of bourgeois institutions has been grossly misinterpreted as the expression of a theoretical purism and a political isolationism. Pannekoek's dual perspective applied not only to trade-union struggles but to parliamentary activity. Thus, on the positive side, electoral and parliamentary politics helps to advance the working class: "If today, in every country dominated by capitalism, one sees great socialist parties forming to enlighten the proletariat and, above all, to lead the war against the dominant order, this power, grown to such considerable proportions, is due essentially to the parliamentary struggle." Pannekoek adds that "the first effect of parliamentary conflict is to enlighten the workers about their class situation." Of course, this arena can never be the locus of "the class war itself: however, it does in a sense constitute the *essence of the class war*. In the speeches of a small group of labor members of parliament, the interests and ideas of the masses are expressed in a condensed form" (*ibid.*, pp. 94-95). So much for the caricature of an abstentionist council tradition.

At the same time, from the perspective of long-term revolutionary transformation (rather than of the tactical exigencies of everyday politics), Pannekoek invoked the *negative* features of parliamentarism, which in part stem from the "illusion that the electoral system can guide our ship through calm waters to the harbor of the future State." The fatal defect of revisionism, which was clinging to an "exclusive parliamentarism," is that it saw electoral activity "not as a means of increasing proletarian power, but as the battle itself for this power." Hence a hierarchical political division of labor within the movement is unavoidable: "If one holds that political conflict should occur exclusively within parliament, then the parliamentarians are the only people called upon to wage it. It is not the working masses who are involved, but their representatives who fight on their behalf. The masses figure only at the ballot boxes.... The party deputies thus take up a vanguard position; they become a special class, the 'guides.' It is only natural that the most capable comrades, having the profoundest knowledge of socialism, should by what they say exercise a profound influence over the party.... Through their technical knowledge in juridical and administrative matters, through their familiarity with the petty combines, intrigues, and calculations of day-to-day politics, they regard themselves as superior to non-parliamentarians.... In this way, the parliamentary section places itself above

3. Bricianer, p. 132. Pannekoek's viewpoint here was that trade-union development follows two broad stages — an initial radicalizing process, followed by a gradual dynamic of stable integration into the capitalist political economy. This analysis ran closely parallel to Gramsci's during the latter's council period. At no point did Pannekoek (or Gramsci, for that matter) suggest that socialist politics ignore the sphere of trade-union struggles, which is what Lenin railed against in *Left-Wing Communism;* instead of merely accepting the union hierarchy and its economistic objectives, however, the idea was to progressively win workers over to the council form.

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the people and the party, by virtue of the 'superiority of its political knowledge.' When the masses accept such tutelage, democratic sentiments are doomed to disappear from within the party." Not only democracy, but revolutionary vitality itself is sacrificed because "instead of class war rooted in principles, the aim is to exercise an indirect 'political influence' through parliamentary conditions and blocs" (*ibid.*, pp. 96-97).

This far-reaching critique of a trade-union and party-centered socialism — and of the statism that went to the very theoretical and political core of Social Democracy — paved the way for Pannekoek's novel formulation, very tentative at first, of an anti-bureaucratic Marxist alternative. The institutional expression of such an alternative would be a federative system of local councils. In the highly charged atmosphere of the immediate postwar period, with capitalism in crisis and Social Democracy in shambles, the council radicals in Germany, Holland, Italy and elsewhere thought that the tremendous upsurge of working-class militancy would generate, more or less organically and spontaneously, a flowering of local revolutionary organs at the point of production — a dream that was at best only partially and briefly fulfilled. In one of his initial bursts of optimism, Pannekoek, writing in the Dutch periodical *Die Niewe Tijd* in 1920, enthused that "the soviet system, constructed from within, is not only capable of uprooting and abolishing the state bureaucracy, but the trade-union bureaucracy as well; it will form not only the new political organs to replace parliament, but also the basis of the new trade unions." Thus, "if the most important element of the revolution consists in the masses taking their own affairs — the management of society and production — in hand themselves, then any form of organization which does not permit control and direction by the masses themselves is counter-revolutionary and harmful; and it should therefore be replaced by another form that is revolutionary in that it enables the workers themselves to determine everything actively" (Smart, p. 116). This spirit of council communism was one that Pannekoek would never abandon for the remaining 40 years of his life.

Yet, the theoretical premises of the European radical left would have to embrace more than such a spirit, and indeed, they raised some complicated issues: if in fact the councils could be seen as the "natural" expression of proletarian self-activity within a certain phase of capitalist development — that is, if the council movement represented the most mature form of working-class struggles — then why had they failed to emerge (before 1918) in any of the advanced countries and why, during the period 1918-1923, did they so rapidly decline? In other words, why did Social Democracy, and later Leninism, so easily establish hegemony within the proletarian and mass movements? This question, of course, is too historically complex to be explored in depth here. It was precisely this question, however, that motivated a good part of the work undertaken by Pannekoek and Gorter; and their search for answers led them to what today would be called a "Gramscian perspective" — an analysis of the role of ideological domination.

One of Gorter's main contributions, however sketchy, was his analysis of the impact of nationalism as the most salient expression of bourgeois hegemony in the age of imperialism. For Gorter, insofar as capitalist foreign expansion created a new privileged stratum within labor, it simultaneously generated within the proletariat strong tendencies of national chauvinism and reformism, which happened to fit the statist, bureaucratic interests of the party and union leaderships perfectly. Hence patriotism became the most easily manipulated ideological tool at the disposal of the bourgeoisie, and Social Democracy itself became one of the main conduits. The key revolutionary task, in Gorter's view, was "the demystification of imperialism and the corresponding eradication of nationalism" as the precondition for any "increase in the

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consciousness and thus in the development of a militant proletariat" (Smart, pp. 76-78). Pannekoek's analysis was typically more sweeping. For him, the repeated failure of the European working class movements to make real headway - i.e., to produce mature and durable council formations — only "proves that the bourgeoisie possessed another hidden source of power which had remained intact and which permitted it to re-establish its hegemony when everything seemed shattered. This hidden power is the bourgeoisie's ideological hold over the proletariat. Because the proletarian masses were still completely governed by a bourgeois mentality, they restored the hegemony of the bourgeoisie with their own hands after it had collapsed" (Smart, p. 103).

This "spiritual" side of class domination, which Pannekoek emphasized in virtually all of his writings, was seen as more pervasive in the advanced countries with strong bourgeois traditions and institutions than in the Eastern European nations where "patriarchal feudalism" and "village communism" still held sway and where "the masses related to communism in a more primitive, simple, open way, as receptive as blank paper." In countries like England and France, on the other hand, "the bourgeois past...survives in the proletariat as an organizational tradition that stands in the way of class unity necessary for the creation of a new world." In a passage that could just as well have been written by Gramsci, Pannekoek observed: "With its centuries of material and intellectual commerce, its literature and art, bourgeois culture has embedded itself in the proletarian masses, and generates a feeling of national solidarity, anchored deeper in the unconscious than external indifference or superficial internationalism suggests.... Bourgeois culture exists in the proletariat primarily as a traditional cast of thought. The masses caught up in it think in ideological instead of real terms."[4]

It might be argued that Pannekoek was really the first Marxist to articulate *theoretically* the centrality of ideas and consciousness in historical development, though his actual impact here was — as I shall indicate — rather limited. In any case, Pannekoek's sensitivity to the role of ideology decisively shaped his conception of revolutionary transformation in a way that set him apart from much of the European radical left. Even before the German workers' councils became politically visible, he was writing about the underlying need to break the ingrained "spiritual dependence" of the masses on the bourgeoisie as the basis of catalyzing proletarian self-consciousness. Whereas the polar opposites of revisionism and anarchism amounted to nothing more than an illusory break with bourgeois values, class struggle at the point of production would presumably advance along an entirely different plane: the foundation of a gradually expanding collective social power, it would necessarily wage full-scale ideological and cultural warfare against bourgeois domination. Pannekoek insisted that a Marxism that sought to explain political action in terms of material relations was useless, that "everything which motivates the actions of men does so through the mind" in that "their actions are determined by their will, and by all the ideals, principles, and motives that exist in the mind" (Smart, p. 70). The relationship between ideological and economic forces is clearly dialectical; yet, in the long-term interplay of social classes and groups, "what happens in the economic domain must first come alive in the minds of men, for only there does the transforming act occur." What, then, serves as a stimulus to the transformation of popular

4. Smart, pp. 104-105. Pannekoek added here that the mechanism for perpetuating ideological domination is the intellectuals — the priests, teachers, literati, journalists, artists and politicians who "foster, develop and propagate bourgeois culture" and who thus act as a "mediator between the hegemony of capital and the interests of the masses."

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consciousness? Here Pannekoek was either vague or, as was more often the case, he retreated to the comfort of a messianic crisis theory that in fact always circumscribed his view of consciousness. Thus: "Economic causes act as a stimulus to class consciousness, but with an intensity that varies from case to case. Whereas in phases of prosperity the masses are satisfied with their lot and think only about working, these phases are followed by crises in which discontent grows, revolutionary attitudes gain strength, and the proletariat moves into action" (Bricianer, p. 233). This statement could easily have been lifted from one of the venerated textbooks of orthodox Marxism.

The tension between "organic" and "crisis" schemas permeated the entire corpus of Pannekoek's thought; aboundant passages supporting either of these approaches can easily be found. As a counter to the crisis model proposed above, for example, consider the following statement (written in 1909): "The proletarian class struggle develops gradually. It begins with a workers' revolt in some factory against unendurable working conditions. Little by little, these workers set up permanent associations, and perceive that their interests do not just happen to run counter to those of the employers, but that this conflict is permament. They thus become aware that they form a particular class, and their outlook widens to include the entire class" (*ibidi.*, pp. 75-76). Yet here, as in the crisis scenario, Pannekoek is consistent in seeing the revolutionary process as the expression of proletarian self-activity, for "the conditions of revolutionary transformation exist germinally in daily action" and therefore the struggle for reforms sooner or later grows into a struggle for socialism. Against the material contradictions of capitalism, bourgeois ideological hegemony grows increasingly fragile; thus "socialism is a *natural product* of capitalism and at the same time its *mortal enemy*. One cannot speak, therefore, of a power external to capitalism that will someday attack and overthrow it; on the contrary, socialism lives in the heart of the system and draws all its strength from the system" (*ibid.*, p. 85). Given this framework, Pannekoek's extreme spontaneism could hardly come as a surprise. In a spirit suggestive of Luxemburg, he wrote that "the revolution... develops through the process of internal struggle. It is within the proletariat itself that the resistances develop which it must overcome; and in overcoming them, the proletariat overcomes its own limitations and matures towards communism" (Smart, p. 109). And, as in Luxemburg's approach, the very indeterminacy and formlessness of the spontaneist model required for its political validation some version of crisis theory.

Unlike Luxemburg, however, Pannekoek did see growing out of the class struggle a new organizational form and formula — the workers' councils. The specific content of a new institutional fabric remained unclear, however, since Pannekoek assumed that the details would be concretized only through the class struggle; what did seem unambiguous, at the same time, was the political *locus* of soviet democracy, which would be the "natural groupings of workers in the process of production, the real basis of society" (Bricianer, p. 276). The councils too would be the organic by-product of capitalist evolution, the spontaneous expression of workers' resistance to class domination. They would demystify formal democracy and the alienated politics of party systems, laying the basis of a fully socialized movement "without the bureaucracy that turns the state into a power external to the state it governs."[5] While other council

5. Bricianer, p. 167. Any familiarity with Pannekoek's Marxism should be enough to dispel the easy stereotype of a German radical left whose "faith in the masses" was so total as to lead it to distrust all forms of organization. Clearly, it distrusted only *certain* forms of organization. Still, the myth persists and has been reproduced by historians like Carl Schorske, who contends that

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theorists (the early Gramsci, for example) were essentially preoccupied with the *local* form, Pannekoek turned his attention to the idea of a more comprehensive, federative system of conciliar democracy that would check the tendencies toward extreme fragmentation and also furnish the infrastructure of a new state. Pannekoek even flirted with the notion of a *party* — one that would perform exclusively intellectual and educational functions — as a mechanism that might provide some theoretical coherence to the movement.[6] But from beginning to end, he adhered uncompromisingly to the thesis that only a council network rooted in production was institutionally compatible with an emancipatory socialism. So committed was he that the inherently unstable and ephemeral nature of such local structures in European politics never appeared to trouble him seriously. As a result, he was completely unable to come to grips with the dramatic failure of the postwar council movements — including those he had experienced closely in Germany — to survive as forces of democratization. Blinded by the mechanical separation of economics and politics that was the theoretical flaw of all council tendencies (and shared, ironically, by Social Democracy), Pannekoek's lapse on this question was hardly accidental.[7]

But in the immediate postwar years, Lenin and the Bolsheviks viewed the emergent council struggles as a disturbing element in the European left and a threat to the vanguardist model championed by the Comintern. Lenin was harsh in his critique of "Horner" (Pannekoek) and other radical leftists in *Left-Wing Communism*: "What the opposition has come to is the repudiation of the party principle and of party discipline. And this is tantamount to completely disarming the proletariat for the benefit of the bourgeoisie."[8] Any realistic assessment of the councils would reveal that they were "nothing but empty phrasemongering," that they were "ridiculous and childish nonsense," and that they amounted to nothing more than "new and artificial forms of labor organization."[9] Lenin's depiction of the council left was inaccurate: there was nothing to sustain the contention that it was anti-organizational, anti-

organization for Pannekoek was "an almost Platonic sense of proletarian solidarity." See *German Social Democracy* (New York, 1965), p. 248.

6. Pannekoek's conception of a Marxist party diverged significantly, of course, from that put forward by both the Social Democrats and Lenin. Instead of being a mechanism for taking hold of state power (in whatever fashion), it would carry out primarily ideological-educational functions. In one of his few references to the possible role of a revolutionary party, Pannekoek wrote that "it is not the party that makes the revolution, but *the class as a whole*. Hence the party has a completely different function from that ascribed to it in the old Social Democratic conception. It cannot absorb in itself the whole of the class and act for the class; on the contrary, it can only be the avant-garde of the class and remain true to its spiritual orientation. In their places of work, the communists are the ones who see farthest, who have the clearest ideas, and who are the most devoted to the cause; that is why they are able to step forward at any time, to propose the best solutions.... All action invariably demands a spiritual battle of the masses aimed at achieving lucidity — a battle in which opposing parties and tendencies meet and clash; and the Communist Party should wage this battle for the workers under the eyes of the workers. In this way, then, the party becomes, at each stage of the class struggle, a primordial organ, as it were, the soul of the revolution" (Bricianer, p. 239). Throughout his writings, Pannekoek remained at a very general level of abstraction in his treatment of the party; it was never clear, for example, how *this* particular Marxist party would differ from the others in its actual political functioning.

7. For a more extensive analysis of the political failures of the traditional council movements (in Russia and Italy as well as Germany), see my "Marxism, Prefigurative Communism, and the Problem of Workers' Control," *Radical America* (November 1977-February 1978). See also Brian Peterson, "Workers' Councils in Germany," *New German Critique*, No. 4, for an excellent overview of the German movement.

8. V.I. Lenin, *Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder* (New York, n.d.), p. 28.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 31, 33.

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leadership, and abstentionist. Moreover, the attack itself contradicted Lenin's own (earlier) praise of the soviets and factory committees in Russia as bastions of revolutionary democracy. In any event, by 1920 the distinction between *party* communism and *council* communism had been clearly established within the European left.

It was precisely this antagonism that led to the decision of Pannekoek, Gorter, and other council leaders to break with the Comintern in 1920. Having provisionally supported the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917-1918, they distanced themselves from the new regime once the features of bureaucratic centralism became more visible. Reflecting on the trajectory of Soviet development in the late 1930s, in his *Lenin as Philosopher*, Pannekoek attempted to establish a relation between Lenin's "middle-class materialism" and the ultimately bourgeois character of the process that was transforming Russian society. If the philosophical core of Leninism was its crude and mechanistic materialism, which assumed a fixed, eternal world confined to the realm of physical matter in contrast to Marx's *historical* materialism with its dialectic between social being and consciousness, then the state-capitalist outcome of the Bolshevik Revolution was determined well before the seizure of the Winter Palace. For Pannekoek, bourgeois materialism — derived from a fetishism of the natural sciences — mirrored the capitalist struggle against feudalism, whereas philosophy (understood as a science of *society*) was the basis of the proletarian revolution against capitalism. In the case of Russia, the bourgeois materialism of Plekhanov and Lenin corresponded to a "Marxism" that was employed as the ideological weapon against feudal and religious hegemony under conditions where the bourgeoisie was too weak and dependent to carry out its own project of industrialization. Hence, "to Lenin and the Bolshevik Party the first life-task was the annihilation of Czarism and of the backward, barbarous social system of Russia."[10] To comprehend *Materialism and Empiriocriticism,* then, was to recognize the primacy of anti-religious struggle in Lenin's thought; his "fundamentalist materialism" was not a philosophy of class struggle in the sense that it was unfaithful to Marxist dialectics. Pannekoek concluded that in Russia, "Marxism" — or, more accurately, Leninism — became the modernizing ideology of a radical intelligentsia bent on mobilizing the small industrial proletariat behind essentially state-capitalist objectives. The predictable result was a new system of production directed by a state bureaucracy and rationalized by means of a centralized planning apparatus, with the workers forming an exploited class. It was nothing but sheer "illusion that the Russian Revolution was the first step of world revolution liberating the entire proletarian class from capitalism."[11]

While elements of this critique were already present in Pannekoek's earlier work, the full analysis was not developed until 1938 with the first appearance of *Lenin as Philosopher*. A good part of this short volume is devoted to the theoretical legacy of Dietzgen (whom Pannekoek practically worshipped) as well as to the influence of Mach and Avenarius; only readers eager to learn more about the early formation of Pannekoek's thought are likely to find this material interesting. The analysis of Leninism and the Russian Revolution contains more of value. However, the attempt to salvage a scientific Marxism by differentiating between "good" (dialectical) and "bad" (static, ahistorical) types of materialism necessarily collapses, since to opt for the "dialectical" logic of the latter obliterates the flimsy premises of *all* variants of materialism. (Lenin himself agonized over exactly this question in his *Philosophical Notebooks* — a source that Pannekoek unfortunately did not have the opportunity to

10. *Lenin as Philosopher*, p. 95.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

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read.) The political thrust of Pannekoek's left attack on Leninism and the Bolshevik model, moreover, was hardly novel, especially by the late 1930s — various elements of the critique, to one degree or another, were shared by Luxemburg, Korsch, Trotsky and his followers, the anarchists and left communists, and (later) by theorists like Bruno Rizzi. Yet, to Pannekoek's credit, he did push the left assault further and more incisively than most; in the end, this was not simply a matter of emphasis but one of theoretical depth and comprehensiveness, which enabled him to grasp the fundamentally class nature of the Soviet system and the extreme statism of the entire Bolshevik tradition.[12] Even if Marxist categories derived from the theory of "state capitalism" (or "state socialism," as Pannekoek sometimes referred to it) were inadequate to the task of analyzing Soviet development, they did point to a *systematic* and *historical* critique that ruled out political engineering from above as a means of getting the Bolshevik Revolution back on its proper course. A bourgeois revolution could not be transformed into a socialist one by simply locating the right leaders or correct strategies.[13]

The classical form of council communism, which flourished during the heroic but brief moments of post-World War I mass insurgency in Europe and then disappeared with the rise of fascism and Stalinism, found its clearest theoretical voice in the Marxism of Pannekoek. In its rejection of Social Democracy and Leninism as twin expressions of statism, the council tradition sought a "new orientation" for revolutionary theory and strategy in the advanced capitalist countries. But this new point of departure was in many respects illusory. For one thing, it never managed to escape the most debilitating features of orthodox Marxism: a strict philosophical materialism, an uncritical posture toward science, a narrow productivism and workerism, faith in crisis theory, and even a tendency toward theoretical dogmatism. For another, the postwar council movements were the product of the initial phases of capitalist rationalization, when a relatively homogeneous proletariat was fighting to preserve a degree of craft skills and job autonomy that was being destroyed by the bureaucratization of the workplace. They corresponded, moreover, to a pre-Keynesian period in which the chaos of the market economy was commonly associated with brutal and unmediated "class war" at the point of production.

Pannekoek's scientific outlook was no doubt shaped by his life-long work as an astronomer. Despite his denunciation of Lenin's *crude* materialism, he never went on to challenge the fatal limitations of materialist logic in general — along the lines pursued, for example, by Korsch, Lukacs and Gramsci. In Pannekoek's writings,

12. Of the various theorists mentioned here, only Korsch linked a negative assessment of Bolshevik centralism with a critique of Lenin's *philosophy*; indeed, it appears that some of Korsch's main arguments found their way into *Lenin as Philosopher*. For example: "Lenin and his followers unilaterally transfer their dialectic into Object, Nature, and History and they present knowledge merely as the passive mirror and reflection of this objective Being in the subjective consciousness. In so doing they destroy both the dialectical interrelation of being and consciousness, and, as a necessary consequence, the dialectical interrelation of *theory and practice*." *Marxism and Philosophy* (New York, 1970), pp. 132-133. For both Korsch and Pannekoek, of course, it was the vanguard party that gave expression to this undialectical dualism — and for both, the unification of subject and object, theory and practice was expected to occur within the *councils*.

13. Thus: "Russian Bolshevism cannot be reproached for having abandoned the way of Marxism; for it was never on that way. Every page of Lenin's philosophical work is there to prove it; and Marxism itself, by its thesis that theoretical opinions are determined by social relations and necessities, makes clear that it could not be otherwise. Marxism, however, at the same time shows the necessity of the legend; every middle-class revolution, requiring working-class and peasant support, needs the illusion that it is something different, larger, more universal." *Lenin as Philosopher*, pp. 97-98.

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Marxism always remained the "class science of the proletariat." Like Kautsky, he argued that "the ideas and conceptions of the proletariat have as their basis a science of society that enables them to foresee the consequences of their actions and the reactions of other classes. Up to the present, ideologies...were simply an extravagant reflection of the economic situation, whereas socialism constitutes a clear scientific theory" (Bricianer, p. 115). And like Kautsky, he posited a sharp distinction between "ideology" and "science," maintaining that "ideology is above all a matter of sentiment, while science is a matter of intellect." Moreover, ideological and tactical differences (like socialism itself) ultimately "flow in effect from material conditions. Consequently, they are linked with various stages of capitalist development in different regions and branches of production." Hence it is the role of a unified *scientific* theory to enlighten the proletariat by transforming "immediately felt interests" into true class consciousness: "It is the implementation of theory, the scientific basis of socialism, that will contribute most effectively to both securing for the movement a tranquil and sure course, and to the transformation of unconscious instinct into conscious human action" (*ibid.*, pp. 116-117).

The materialist orthodoxy of Pannekoek's philosophy was paralleled by the extreme productivism of his social theory. He set out from basic Marxist premises in affirming that "the system of production itself, based on the state of production forces, determines the development of society, especially through the force of class struggle."[14] From this, Pannekoek deduced the concept that production constitutes the basis of all social existence. Reflecting the influence of Sorelian syndicalism, he maintained that because capitalism was basing its strength in "enormous new complexes of factories" such "factory organization is *the* organization for the revolution in Western Europe and North America," the sole locus of real transformative activity. If in civil society as a whole social relations are fragmentary and alienated, "*in the factories the proletarian himself counts for something*.... Because the revolution begins in the factories he can engage in active struggle there, in armed struggle. In the factories, therefore, every proletarian and hence the entire proletariat can become lucid communists, complete revolutionaries...factory organization arouses the militant, the free man in every proletarian."[15] It follows that "socialism, both as an objective and as class organization, is in every respect a product of the conditions specific to large industry. These conditions bring home the possibility and the necessity of a socialist order" (Bricianer, p. 82). Unfortunately, the effects of such a confining theoretical focus were to deny the very political and strategic opening that Pannekoek strived so hard to achieve: what his scheme produced was a romanticized unitary proletariat defined as the single agency capable of achieving socialist transformation. Hence this version of council communism, despite its emphasis on popular self-emancipation, amounted to little more than a partial, one-dimensional transcendence of Social Democracy and Leninism. What the theory lacked was any concept of social totality; for example, the workers' councils — strictly limited to the point of production — did not embrace any broad conception of (generalized) self-management or of social revolution outside the workplace. Because

14. *Lenin as Philosopher*, p. 20.

15. Smart, pp. 56-157. Italics in the original. Out of the logic of this productivism flowed an equally uncritical economism; whereas Lenin's premise was that workplace struggles were inherently narrow and that it was the task of *political* intervention to broaden (revolutionize) them, Pannekoek concluded just the opposite. Thus: "We must leave the field of political party strife, now chiefly intended to fool the masses, and turn to the field of economic interests, where the workers intuitively fight their bitter struggle for living conditions." Bricianer, p. 287.

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it was so confined to the factory setting, Pannekoek's *political* theory was notably weak (in contrast to that of Lenin, Gramsci, and even Luxemburg); there is some insightful analysis of the bourgeois state, but virtually no strategic discussion of how it might be transformed through political struggle — the assumption obviously being that the reconstituted factory would be the nucleus of a new state. Armed with this theoretical framework, it is difficult to imagine how the European council movements could ever have escaped the straitjacket of localism and factory-centered spontaneism that led, very rapidly, to political impotence.

True enough, the theme of comprehensive social transformation was not really taken up by any Marxist current (including the German radical left) during this period, and it would be unreasonable to expect Pannekoek or any other council theorist to have fully integrated it into his schema. Still, one is impressed by the extent to which the theoretical work of others — Lukacs, Gramsci, Reich, and the early Frankfurt School to name only the most important within Marxism — had seriously begun to address such issues in the 1920s. There is no indication that Pannekoek's orthodoxy underwent much real change in the nearly 40 years following the council failures, or that he was able to build upon any new critical departures during that period even though he remained intellectually and politically active. His productivist Marxism never escaped the historical phase of capitalism that spawned it; for him, bourgeois society in its entirety was always an immense factory.[16]

Council communism did generate powerful theoretical attacks on all forms of bureaucratic Marxism, and kept this critique alive at a time when the European left was in retreat. As a *political* alternative to the Social Democratic and Leninist models, however, it was a failure — although certain elements of its theory and strategy were visible in subsequent movements, including the Spanish Revolution, Trotskyism, situationism, the Eastern European revolts, and the new left. The fact is that council communism today bears all of the ambiguities and contradictions of its historical origins. Perhaps Pannekoek's critique of anarchism was also applicable, in different context, to his own theory: if the anarchists desired to return to a vanishing society of free and equal artisans, the council communists seemed to want to preserve the imagined social reality of a homogeneous, solidary, and heroic proletariat that was destined to disappear with the onset of bureaucratic state capitalism.

Carl Boggs

16. Richard Gombin, *The Radical Tradition* (London, 1978), p. 117.

Peter Steinfels. *The Neoconservatives: The Men Who Are Changing America's Politics.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979. 335 pages.

The American political spotlight shines on a narrow stage, illuminating the actors so they assume enormous proportions and exaggerating both their importance and the distinctions between them. In the shadows, the left, and even the extreme right, operate almost totally out of the public eye. The choice between relatively similar positions, Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford, or Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagen, emerges as an ideological struggle between contrary political philosophies. The potential for change appears great, while the results are almost always the same. All other voices are pushed off to the sides, ignored or unknown. Mort Sahl used to joke about a friend who read *Time* and *Newsweek* to gain both sides of the political question. It isn't a joke.

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The small space in which "respectable" American politics operates presents problems for political observers. Denied the luxury of their European counterparts, where at least one can argue *how* communistic is Eurocommunism or to what degree has labour compromised on its socialistic platform, the American observers must content themselves with smaller gradations. These less ideological considerations become the material for political analysis where the slightest twitch is blown up to seem like the earth's trembling. Thus, George McGovern's 1972 campaign has gone down in Democratic Party lore as its one excessive veer too far to the left. Of late, observers have focused on a new development, "the most powerful new political force in America," declared *Esquire*'s cover, "Neoconservatism." Peter Steinfels, author of the *Esquire* piece, has expanded his analysis in a recently published book, whose subtitle once again heralds the import of this newly perceived trend. *The Neoconservatives: The Men Who Are Changing America's Politics* attempts a critical evaluation of this movement and its prime exponents.

Neoconservatism emerged as a political phrase several years ago when Michael Harrington sought a term to describe the emergent political constellation of increasingly conservative old liberals, unhappy with current liberalism but unwilling to go over to the *National Review* and Ronald Reagan. Since then, the term has been bandied about in all the media, lumped with the New Right, "Proposition 13 Fever," right-to-lifers, and Jerry Brown, as one of the variety of ways Americans are expressing a general, creeping conservatism. A number of well-known American intellectuals have been proclaimed the brain trust of neoconservatism and one of their number, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, parlayed his neoconservative connections and jingoistic puffery into the United States Senate. Bolstered by his intellectual comrades — Irving Kristol, Daniel Bell, Norman Podhoretz, Nathan Glazer, and others — Moynihan has made neoconservatism a position with electoral possibilities. Beyond their Senate seat, neoconservatives control two well-known intellectual journals, *The Public Interest* and *Commentary*. In addition, they have direct access to a host of other publications, from the editorial pages of *The Wall Street Journal* to *Daedelus* and the *American Scholar*.

Steinfels attempts a comprehensive analysis of neoconservatism, accepting its existence and uniqueness from his opening words. Once he has declared its distinctiveness, his discussion of the various components of neoconservatism is complete and critical. He devotes three long chapters to its most famous practitioners: Kristol, Moynihan, and Bell. In addition, chapters carefully detail several areas central to the neoconservative position. He assesses the various arguments about "equality," which the neoconservatives eschew in favor of "liberty." Nathan Glazer's *Affirmative Discrimination,* an attack on affirmative action programs and preferential quotas, serves as the best example of this distinction. Neoconservatives believe in hierarchies, Steinfels tells us. They seek equal access, not equality. "Human talents and abilities. . . distribute themselves along a bell-shaped curve," Irving Kristol concludes, as do incomes and power. "In the United States, nature is triumphant: we are perfectly bell-shaped." "Nobody cares about equality," Kristol believes, "as long as everything is getting better." Inappropriate commitment to equality leads only to a populist leveling or, as Bell argues, a resentment against "the authority represented in the superior competence of individuals."

The complementary position — for both Steinfels and neoconservatives — emerges in discussions of democracy. Here the intellectuals often have it both ways. Less subtle, but no less vehement, than Spiro Agnew, neoconservatives attack the elitism of the liberal intelligentsia, most clearly represented by *The New York Review of Books*.

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Simultaneously, anything which smacks of populism poses a threat. One neoconservative, Samuel P. Huntington, has gone so far as to propose that just as "we have come to recognize that there are potentially desirable limits to economic growth," we should encourage "potentially desireable limits to the extension of political democracy." Among Huntington's solutions are the encouragement of "some measure of apathy and non-involvement" on the part of "marginal social groups, as in the case of blacks." Huntington's thesis, as Steinfels suggests, would be dismissable were it not that Huntington is a professor of government at Harvard, co-editor of *Foreign Policy*, and made this argument in a report for the Trilateral Commission entitled *The Crisis of Democracy*. Zbigniew Brzezinski directed the Trilateral Commission in 1975, when the report was published, and commission members included Jimmy Carter, Walter Mondale, W. Michael Blumenthal, Cyrus R. Vance, Paul Warnke and Harold Brown. Huntington is not a lone voice, nor do his words fall on unimportant ears.

Steinfels seriously deals with these two main themes — equality and democracy — sometimes too seriously. He leads the reader through John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice*, seeming at times to want both to defends Rawls from neoconservative attack, as well as demonstrate to neoconservatives that Rawls offers answers for the problems they raise, if only they would *really* read him. By and large, however, Steinfels' critiques of these neoconservative positions are detailed and dismantling. Mostly hoisting them on their own petards, he does summon a few experts, such as Christopher Jencks and Michael Walzer, to his cause.

Similarly, Steinfels' analysis of neoconservatism's three power-hitters — Kristol, Moynihan, and Bell — is careful and thoughtful, with a few notable exceptions. Whatever this book's other strengths and weaknesses, it is valuable alone for its dissection of Moynihan. What one senses about Moynihan instinctively, Steinfels makes explicit. A man who has made a success of failures, Moynihan is caught in frequent inconsistencies and flamboyant rhetoric often lacking intellectual support. Characterizing Moynihan as a "professional politician" and the "professor in politics," Steinfels calls into question everything in Moynihan's political dossier, from his supposed poverty-stricken boyhood in Hell's Kitchen (actually a middle-class upbringing spent mostly in New Jersey and Astoria) to his famous or infamous forays into race relations ("The Moynihan Report"), welfare reform (the family assistance plan), and diplomacy (his bombastic approach to his U.N. ambassadorship). Steinfels concludes that while Moynihan "did not produce original scholarship" and "is a notable example of. . . falling your way up the ladder," nonetheless "sooner or later he will be a contender" for the presidency.

Irving Kristol is not running for anything, except perhaps most political labels in one lifetime. A former Trotskyist, socialist, liberal and Democrat, Kristol is the only intellectual who feels fully comfortable with the label neoconservative. For this he has been thrust to the fore of the movement, called its "Godfather" by *Esquire*. Part of his willingness to accept the label derives from his admission that defending capitalism makes one a conservative these days. "Neoconservatism begins with a rejection of socialism," Kristol asserts. "Socialism is a failure. . . . If you reject socialism, then you must replace it with *something*. It cannot be feudalism. I think it has to be capitalism." What Kristol believes distinguishes him from traditional conservatives, however, is the acceptance of a "limited degree of government intervention for social purposes." He is also no libertarian. Kristol worries about the cultural implications of pronography, marijuana, and unruly students, and sees a definite role for government "intervention" into these questions. Becoming one of the intellectuals most favored in the Republican White House from 1969 to 1977, Kristol illustrated for Richard

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Nixon the "parallels between young middle class, white Americans who are resorting to violence and the nardoniki — children of the mid-19th century Russian aristocracy who murdered Czar Alexander II," the *New York Times* reported. Part of Kristol's effectiveness, surely not lost on Richard Nixon, is his knack for aphorism and catchy assertion, several of which Steinfels records. "The history of all modern industrial societies is the story of the gradual transformation of original urban mobs into a people." Or, "Today drug-taking has become a mass habit — among our young masses especially — whose purpose is to secede from our society and our civilization." Or, "The Founding Fathers *intended* this nation to be capitalism."

Kristol is not only singularly identified with neoconservatism in the public eye, but in the eyes of other neoconservatives as well. "Whenever I read about what neoconservatives think," says Bell, "I say, 'it's not neoconservatism, it's Irving.' " Unlike Kristol, Bell is unhappy being called a neoconservative. He describes himself in a now-famous trinity: "I am a socialist in economics, a liberal in politics, and a conservative in culture." Steinfels assesses Bell's self-description, accurately questioning just how "socialistic" is Bell's socialism. In fact, Bell is much closer to "welfare liberalism," Steinfels concludes, echoing Harrington's analysis in *The Twilight of Capitalism*. Bell's cultural conservatism is fully in keeping with neoconservative style and his "liberal politics" may make him the Democratic Kristol. Nixon passed out copies of Kristol's *On the Democratic Idea in America*; Jody Powell reports that Carter studied Bell's *Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* during his summer hiatus of self-analysis. Bell also flew to Camp David as part of the political-economic-spiritual entourage who counseled Carter.

Despite his initial criticism of Bell, however, Steinfels is ultimately unhappy not that Bell is a neoconservative, but because he could be a good one and is not. Here Steinfels own ambivalences emerge. Editor of the "liberal Catholic" journal *Commonweal*, Steinfels likes Bell's moralism and sees him as a "cautionary sage." "A party of neoconservative 'cautionary sages' with Bell's scope, complexity, and open-endedness," Stenifels concludes, "would be a valuable force in American political life." Steinfels echoes the attitude which one of neoconcervatism's progenitors, Lionel Trilling, took thrity years ago. In the preface to *The Liberal Imagination,* Trilling recalled John Stuart Mill's encouragement of liberals to read the conservative Coleridge. "What Mill meant," Trilling suggested, "was that the intellectual pressure which an opponent like Coleridge could exert would force liberals to examine their position for its weaknesses and complacencies." Steinfels cites Trilling's argument in his own introduction and the role he sees for Bell's style of analysis clearly fits the Mill-Coleridge model. Perhaps as a liberal in the traditionally conservative world of Catholicism, Steinfels feels the necessity of a converse situation in American politics — neoconservative "cautionary sages" responding to the activities of a liberal society, just as Catholic liberals respond to Church traditionalism.

Steinfels' perspective fails him, though, not because the world could not use a few "cautionary sages," but in his setting out a clear opposition where one does not clearly exist. The use of Lionel Trilling is illustrative. Steinfels cites Trilling as a liberal calling for a conservative critique to keep liberalism vital. Later, he includes Trilling among three recently deceased scholars who "could justly be associated with neoconservatism." (The others are Richard Hofstadter and Alexander Bickel). Morris Dickstein argued several years ago for Trilling's unappreciated contribution to creating the sensibility which led to the New Left. The late Columbia critic cannot be all things to all analysts. Or can he?

The problem of placing Trilling on the political spectrum demonstrates that

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Steinfels and others who have focused on the distinctiveness of neoconservatism have lost sight of the forest while trying to identify the subspecies of trees. Steinfels has taken mainstream American politics as the whole and fails to see neoconservatism's continuities with the past, especially recent American liberalism. He makes much of the reactions of the neoconservatives to the events of the 1960s, but their ideas and attitudes predate the emergence of the New Left. It is probably more accurate to identify the New Left as a reaction to *them* than vice versa.

In the introduction to his collected essays on student unrest, *Remembering the Answers,* Nathan Glazer asks rhetorically, "How does a radical, a mild radical...in the late 1950s end up a conservative, a mild conservative...in early 1970?" (This was written before the term neoconservative became fashionable). His answer is to describe "mild radicals and radicalism" in the 1950s. The names he cites are Paul Goodman, Dwight MacDonald, Irving Howe, Michael Harrington, and C. Wright Mills. The issues radicals found pressing included demonstrations against civil defense, support of Fidel Castro, standing with Jane Jacobs against urban renewal, favoring public housing and tenant organizations. One could submit Glazer's 1950s radicalism to the same sort of analysis to which Steinfels subjects Bell's socialism. "Radicalism," Glazer writes, "having rejected Marx, was in a state of peculiar openness." More accurately, Glazer's radicalism was in a state of welfare liberalism.

Yet, Glazer is the radical of the 1950s. Most of the other neoconservatives considered themselves liberals. What is striking is that despite changing their labels, their ideas have not significantly changed. There is more continuity between the 50s and the 70s than Steinfels allows, especially when one steps back from the specific issues under discussion. The neoconservative critique of populism did not begin with the students and demonstrations of the 1960s; it was appropriated from their own arguments of the 1950s. Populism was viewed as a conservative force — neoconservatives were liberals then — responsible for Joseph McCarthy and Barry Goldwater. This position was given its historical legitimacy with Richard Hofstadter's *Age of Reform,* where the first Populists were reassigned from left to right, and received its contemporary application in the collection Bell edited, *The Radical Right.* Mass movements contesting "the authority represented in the superior competence of individuals" disturbed Bell two decades before *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism.*

The role of intellectuals, often cited as a neoconservative lynchpin, is also nothing new. Steinfels concludes his assessment of neoconservatives by calling them the real "new class." The "knowledge industry;" Kristol calls them, "a kind of permanent brain trust to the political, the military, the economic authorities. These are the men who commute regularly to Washington, who help draw up programs for reorganizing the bureaucracy...who analyze the course of economic growth." Thirty years ago, in his one novel, Lionel Trilling described a young economics professor: "Don was scarcely the word for Arthur. Arthur quite destroyed the notion of donnishness with its meaning of retreat and isolation. As for being young and a professor, that was at present one of the great things about Arthur. At twenty-eight Arthur Croom was the political man whom the nation had not had in sufficient numbers. He was the man in whom the drive for power did not destroy intelligence and character...he had a resistent toughness about the way of the world...There was strong talk of a Washington job for Arthur Croom." All through the 1950s, liberal intellectuals pressed their claims for social utility and intellectual involvement in government. Many received their chance, especially in the early 1960s, including Moynihan, Glazer, and Huntington.

Foreign policy considerations most clearly illustrate the continuity between liberals

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in the 1950s and neoconservatives in the 1970s. The neoconservative view of the world is an attempt to pump new life into what once seemed a dead horse. Moynihan's belligerent defense of American power is only the most prominent example of the revived cold war liberalism which dominated the 1950s. The impact of Vietnam has not been to discredit cold warriorism, according to Norman Podhoretz, but to spawn a "lapse into isolationism...[T]ranslated into the particularities of world affairs today, isolationism amounts to saying that the United States should no longer do anything to check the spread of Communist power and influence anywhere in the world." The crucial debate becomes, for Podhoretz, a "question of will. Have we lost the will to defend the free world — yes, the free world — against the spread of Communism?" The *deja vu* in this 1976 declaration is unnerving. The cold war rhetoric of Podhoretz's "Making the World Safe for Communism" could serve as a textbook example for the attitude of the 1950s. Podhoretz may explain his developing hard line in the new volume of his memoirs, *Breaking Ranks*. Whatever his rationale, *Commentary* under his editorship in the 1970s has become the most hardline anti-Communist intellectual journal since the *Commentary* of Podhoretz's predecessor, Elliot Cohen, in the 1950s.

Kristol has linked together the two elements of intellectual responsibility and American foreign policy. "It is much to be doubted that the U.S. can continue to play an imperial role without the endorsement of its intellectual class." In addition, Kristol believes, "there is no way the U.S. ...can avoid such an imperial role." Without the support of intellectuals our statesmen will be "enfeeble[d]" and their credibility "diminish[ed]." Sol Stein, the second executive director of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, wrote to Elliot Cohen in 1954 that the ACCF "is an active association of leaders of the American cultural community...devoted...to rallying intellectuals here and abroad in a serious and responsible opposition to Communism and all forms of totalitarianism." Kristol was the ACCF's first executive director. Neither Kristol's nor Podhoretz's nor Moynihan's position on foreign policy or intellectuals' role in its creation is new. While fewer calls to arms were sounded by intellectuals during the 1960s, the sentiments persisted. Kristol's arguments, quoted above, first appeared in *Foreign Affairs* in July 1967.

One final example illustrates the connections between liberal attitudes of the 1950s and neoconservative ones in the 1970s. Many of these intellectuals had been involved in radical movements in the late 1930s and 1940s. In discarding their own radicalism, they came to agree with Bell that beyond radicalism's inappropriateness for them, it was entirely moribund. *The End of Ideology,* Bell's most famous book, appeared in 1961, but the essays had been published separately throughout the previous decade. Bell's call, as he has argued since, was for an end to utopianism. The old radical ideas "had become exhausted and no longer had the power to compel allegiance or passion among the intelligentsia." Responding to critics, Bell's call, as he has argued since, was for an end to utopianism. The old radical ideas "had become exhausted and no longer had the power to compel allegiance or passion among the itnelligentsia." Responding to critics, Bell noted that the " 'end of ideology' is not a defense of the status quo but an emphasis on rational social change." Bell did not dismiss the need for utopian vision. Rather, he felt, "the ladder to the City of Heaven can no longer be a 'faith ladder,' but an empirical one: a utopia has to specify *where* one wants to go, *how* to get there, the *costs* of the enterprise, and some realization of, and justificaion for, *who* is to pay."

This explanation, published in *Dissent* in 1961 — one of the "mild radical" magazines Nathan Glazer felt close to — could serve as a style sheet for the journal Bell and Kristol launched in 1966. *The Public Interest* is neoconservatism's

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quintessential publication. It reflects the attitude Bell, Glazer, Seymour Martin Lipset and other liberal social scientists argued in the 1950s: a practical, non-ideological approach to day-to-day problems. Yet, as even Podhoretz observed during his less conservative phase, *The Public Interest* "still operates...within the limits of the immediately possible and the terms of the given situation." Bell's "empirical ladder" turned out to be pragmatic, concrete, and hardly utopian. What is significant is that *The Public Interest* approach is not a product of the 1970s, but was worked out in the 1950s, refined in the 1960s, and only seems new because it serves the 1970s so well.

Perhaps this chronological sequence best indicates what seems "new" about neoconservatism in general. Certainly times have changed since the 1950s. Despite the drum beating of Podhoretz and Moynihan, Americans have adjusted their ideas about foreign policy. The economic salad days of the postwar world have ended amid rampant inflation and the failure of liberal capitalism to stem the economic disarray by traditional measures. Personal expectations have been reduced, while corporate ambitions have skyrocketed. With these changes, neoconservatism has blossomed. Nothing new, it is retooled liberalism; the latest model of welfare liberalism and defense of corporate capitalism.

Kristol is most explicit in this regard. Neoconservatism "is not at all hostile to the idea of the welfare state," only to what Kristol calls "bureaucratic intrusion in the individual's affairs." However, Kristol seems more willing to intrude on individuals than on corporations. He openly discusses limiting personal freedoms, but bridles at economic intervention. "Wage and price controls," for example, he sees as "a military solution to an economic problem." As Steinfels suggests in his general description of neoconservatives, "the answers [they] provide are congenial to powerful forces, probably *the* powerful forces, in American life. By and large, the demands for change that the neoconservatives make of our major institutions are slight and tactical." Nowhere is this clearer than in Irving Kristol's discussion of corporations and corporate power. The modern corporation is "the bureaucratization of the economic order," a change not anticipated in liberal capitalist theory. Kristol's metaphor for this change is telling. "In a sense one can say that the modern large corporation stands to the bourgeois-industrial capitalism of yesteryear as the 'imperial' American polity stands to the isolated republic from which it emerged." The essential difference is that the modern corporation "still needs a legitimating idea" to protect it from anti-corporate sentiment which has emerged. What Kristol fears most is "that the large corporation will be thoroughly integrated into the public sector and lose its private character altogether." This development would "constitute a huge potential threat to the individual liberties Americans have traditionally enjoyed." The feared "intrusion into individual affairs" now becomes clearer. Government intervention into economic and corporate matters — with the veiled threat of nationalization — would lead to the greatest of calamities.

Once again a political philosophy emerges to defend corporate capitalism, allowing government intervention where appropriate, but containing nothing which threatens the basic character or power of American capitalism. Americans have seen this before; in the Progressive era of business rationalization and in the New Deal approach to reform. Neoconservatism is continuous with Cold War liberalism and with the corporate liberalism which has dominated American politics in this century. With the changed status of American power and the rise of global corporations, new adjustments were required, a new "legitimizing idea" needed. The emergence and increasing prominence of neoconservatism speaks to the appropriateness of the ideas for the current state. Politics always adjusts itself to the prevailing economic and social

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realities. Corporate capitalism has grown and, consequently, corporate liberalism needs repair. These men are "changing America's politics," as Steinfels perceives, but in different ways than he suggests. They are not developing a conservative counterpart to liberalism, but a new liberalism. Their new rhetoric or flamboyant gestures should not obscure the fact that they are the same actors we have watched for years, speaking of the same lines. Real critiques and real change still wait in the shadows offstage.

Alexander Bloom

Alfred D. Chandler Jr. *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business.* Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap, 1977. $18.50.

Chandler traces the origins and development of modern business organization in the United States, focusing on the intense rationalization during the industrial revolution. The study stretches from the "traditional enterprise" of the 1790s to the conglomerates of the 1960s, although most attention is devoted to the formation and development, between 1840 and 1920, of the "modern multiunit enterprise." The rise of this type of organization is central to the emergence of oligopolistic, managerial capitalism. Allegedly, this "revolution" in organization was stimulated by the increased efficiency of production and distribution, which made the market's "invisible hand" ineffective as a regulatory force. Chandler's specific goal is to document the rise of the "visible hand" of managerial planning, explaining how it replaced market coordination of the economy.

Chandler outlines his thesis in a set of propositions concerning the transition from entrepreneurial organization to managerial oligopoly. "Modern" firms originated when activities of several small independent "traditional enterprises" were "internalized" in a large firm governed by a managerial hierarchy. This "multiunit" firm is portrayed as an organizational response to new industrial technologies and expanding markets. Supposedly, managers provided the refined administrative coordination necessitated by increases in the complexity, volume and speed of production and distribution. Once established, the managerial "hierarchy itself became a source of [organizational] permanence, power and continued growth" (p. 8). The rise of professional managers, selected on the basis of training and merit, rather than according to family and wealth, allegedly culminated in a separation of management and ownership that characterizes managerial capitalism. Top managers, in contrast to their entrepreneurial forerunners, base their decisions on the long-term interests and future needs of the firm, rather than being exclusively concerned with the maximization of current dividends. Thus, managerial firms invest in long-term growth and diversification, aiming at developing extensive purchasing and marketing organizations that insure full and continuous operation of their facilities. The outcome of these organizational developments was oligopoly — an economy dominated by rationally organized firms of great size, power and efficiency.

Chandler does not break new theoretical ground. Managerialism has been repeated many times in the technocratic literature, extending from the work of Berle and Means in the 1930s to more recent essays by Talcott Parsons. However, Chandler's book has received two major awards — the Pulitzer Prize and the Bancroft Prize —

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designating it as a "major contribution" to American history. Similarly, reviewers have praised it as the most ambitious history of the organization of American business. This praise is somewhat misdirected because the book has serious flaws, particularly Chandler's tendency to link managerialism *exclusively* to the technical requisites of the division of labor. His objectivistically stated theory (allegedly flowing from the "facts") insures an imbalanced account of the relation of production and domination. Yet, despite its tired, technocratic framework, Chandler's substantive history is a useful one. The work provides a detailed description of the growth and development of the large-scale corporate enterprise in America. As other reviewers have noted, it is the most comprehensive source of historical information on the development of corporate *organization*. For this reason, the work deserves to be confronted and criticized.

Chandler begins by discussing post-colonial America's sluggish business world of the artisan, general merchant, family firm and labor intensive technology. The slow transport and low volume of commerce did not command large-scale administrative coordination. Therefore, most firms continued to be organized and managed in a 14th-century manner. Radical changes in the "traditional enterprise" did not occur until after the "revolution in transportation and communication." Chandler holds that railroads developed the first modern managerial organizations to administer their widely scattered operating units' high volume, high velocity operations. Furthermore, the massive capital requirements of railroads resulted in multiple ownerships by persons lacking the time, information and long-term commitment to run the enterprises themselves. Therefore, managers, instead of the largest stock and security owners, governed all levels of the organizations' administration (this presaged the so-called separation of management and ownership of the 10th century). Railroad managers fostered numerous innovations that promoted administrative rationalization, managerial professionalization and the emergence of accounting from bookkeeping. Increasingly, decisions about operations, resource allocation and investment were made on the basis of precise calculations of the potential profitability of corporate strategies.

Through extension and consolidation, railroads grew into self-sustaining, interterritorial systems. By 1900, the systems were consolidated into large managerial enterprises engaging in oligopolistic cooperation and competition. The communications industry — telegraph and telephone — provided the fast, accurate communication links needed by the railroads. Thus, this industry grew with the railroads, also adopting multiunit, managerial organization. Chandler emphasizes strongly that railroads, the "pioneer in American business," provided the organizational model for 20th-century oligopolistic, managerial capitalism.

Chandler argues that the revoultion in transport and communication vastly accelerated the volume and speed of transactions, stimulating industrial growth, specialization and administrative integration. This trend emerged in the rise of *mass distribution*: managerial networks of commodity dealers, wholesalers and mass retailers. For example, in the livestock and grain businesses, standardized evaluation methods and futures trading made distribution more rapid and efficient. In the manufacturing and processing industries, the first department stores, mail order houses and chain stores delivered the goods faster, more reliably, in greater quantity and at lower prices than the general merchant. Chandler argues that these advances were the result of improved managerial coordination.

Mass production began in the capital intensive, technologically advanced, continuous process industries — tobacco, refining, distilling, metal-making and metal-work. By 1900, many of these enterprises adopted "scientific management"

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emphasizing such things as clearly defined line-staff managerial hierarchies; planning departments; strict supervision by route, time and cost; and incentive plans. Managers also further rationalized factory accounting, permitting increased fiscal regulation of production.

The next significant organizational change was the integration of *mass production* with *mass distribution*, which involved the establishment of purchasing organizations insuring an uninterrupted flow of resources needed for production into the plant and sales organizations guaranteeing an equally smooth output to consumers. The cigarette, match, milling, canning, perishable goods and complex machinery industries were leaders in this move toward "vertigal integration." They established purchasing divisions, gained control of natural resources and even bought means of transportation. To market goods, they developed franchise dealers, retail sales offices, canvassers and advertisers. The integration of production and distribution reduced the firm's dependency on other enterprises, maximized the use of its operative facilities, minimized its transactions and processes and lowered the costs of both working capital and fixed capital. Some industries integrated horizontally — by way of merger. However, in the long run, mergers were unsuccessful unless the enterprise also adopted a strategy of vertical integration. After 1900, the vertically integrated firm, with vast purchasing and sales organizations, was standard in capital intensive, continuous process industries. Chandler claims that managerial coordination of all processes from procurement of resources through distribution led to steady and intensive use of facilities as well as production closely articulated to market demand.

Multiunit, integrated industries had competitive advantages deriving from their highly rationalized structure. Reduced costs and high volume sales enabled them to undersell smaller competitors. Furthermore, the establishment of competing multiunit businesses was discouraged by the great costs and risks in markets already dominated by existing integrated enterprises. Consequently, many of the pioneering integrated firms are still thriving today. These massive organizations, producing numerous lines of unrelated products, bring about oligopolistic capitalism where "competition" among a few large firms is based upon credit, service, advertising, product improvement and innovation, rather than price.

Chandler describes the role of middle management as supervisors, evaluators, coordinators and commanders of the firm's daily activities. Aided by their highly rationalized means of determining costs and demand, middle managers invented ways to expand markets, accelerate production, improve distribution and raise profits. On the other hand, executive managers concern themselves exclusively with the enterprises' overall coordination, evaluation, planning and resource allocation. Top managers rationalized the functional departments, instituted more effective regulation of personnel, improved communication among the various offices and refined long-term planning methods. Again, regulatory efforts were assisted by accounting offices that integrated precise financial information into every step of the corporate decision-making process.

Chandler (p. 455) holds that the modern business enterprise had "come of age" by World War I. Once major structural innovations were completed, only refinements were necessary — e.g., hyper-rationalization of technology, organization and accounting; increased product diversification; larger research departments, greater managerial professionalization. Furthermore, the mature enterprise has had to contend with emerging opposition involving increased public resistance to oligopoly, the growth of union power and expansion of government regulation. However, despite these forces, managers have retained and even advanced their control of production,

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distribution and allocation of national and even international resources. Chandler implies throughout that the modern enterprise overcomes its opposition because of its indispensable technical efficiency.

An issue that has divided managerial technocrats and their opponents, and one that Chandler emphasizes strongly, is the alleged separation of management and ownership. Proponents of elite theory — both Marxist and non-Marxist — could counter Chandler's arguments with data about the concentration of stock ownership, interlocking directorates and the continued influence of certain super-rich families and individuals. Adherents of this approach would attack Chandler for underplaying the role of financial institutions, underestimating the powers and functions of boards of directors and generally exaggerating management's contributions, powers and independence. In my opinion, such a critique is justified. However, it does not capture the most problematic element in Chandler's argument, nor does it recognize adequately the significant changes pointed to by the historical data of this book.

Chandler's work documents, although not consciously enough, the role of *organizational* rationalization in the pursuit of exchange value. This theme would have been sharper had the author not implied that efficiency in profit and production go hand in hand. However, Chandler did avoid the crude argument of some technocrats that "market profit" has become "secondary" to production and that "fiduciary" regulation now links managerial organization to "higher-order community interests."[1] His history illustrates that the fundamental goal of profitability has not been abandoned, but has been advanced by managerial capitalism. Furthermore, Chandler recognizes (p. 492) that the wealthy are the "primary beneficiaries" of managerial "advances" and implies (pp. 497, 500) that managerial action is not regulated by broader social needs and interests. When his assertions about the relation of modern management and ownership are evaluated in the light of these qualifications, the heralded separation between the two means little more than that under conditions of late capitalist rationalization, the direct management of the firm's pursuit of exchange value is entrusted to appropriately trained specialists. These specialists continue to work for ownership — in fact, they pursue the owner's ends with heightened rationality.

It may be true that large investors no longer participate in daily management, or in the long-range planning of most modern firms. However, even if this point were the case, the so-called *separation* of ownership and management could still be challenged. Highly rationalized business organization practically guarantees that management will act in the interest of ownership — that is, it will seek to achieve *optimum* valorization[2] of the investor's capital. Chandler, of course, does not present this argument, but his historical description points toward it directly. Throughout the work, he ties managerial rationalization to innovations that improve the profitability of the enterprise. The thorough supervision and careful coordination of the productive-distributive process by managers trained in capitalist economics, accounting and administration has to intensify the economic rationality of the firm. Managerial decisions are usually based upon exact statistical information about costs, finances,

1. Talcott Parsons, *Structure and Process in Modern Societies* (New York, 1960), pp. 47, 64.

2. Notice the emphasis on *optimum* valorization. Chandler stresses the importance of the manager's concern for the long-term growth of the organization, as opposed to the owner's desire for maximum current profits and dividends. I would argue that such managerial strategy is probably in the investor's general interest. The long-term growth of the firm is crucial for continued profits as well as for the stability of both the organization and the broader economic system. My point is that disagreements of this nature are not fundamental and do not contradict my argument concerning the unity of managerial and ownership interests.

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overhead and forecasts of future demand. Managerial actions, then, are always conditioned and in some sense determined by the data. The procedures of analyzing and interpreting this data are geared to profitability and for that reason link management directly to ownership. This link is firmest in the technics of management, but is strengthened further by managerial socialization, professionalism, career benefits and stock ownership in the firm. Finally, any capitalist enterprise that failed to stress profitability would quickly lose investor support and collapse. In such a situation, the executive manager is likely to lose as much, or more, than the investor. Thus it is irrational to expect managers to behave in *fundamentally* different ways than owners.

Managerial action is directed increasingly by highly rationalized means of estimating the probabilities of profit. In late capitalism, even the costs of potentially profitable legal violations are calculated in advance of the arts. If the projected profits are higher than the potential fine and estimated indirect costs, the acts are deemed economically rational and are often adopted as strategies.[3] The extreme routinization of activity in the service of exchange value reflects the interests of investors, even if they play little role in the direct administration of the valorization process. Economic rationality is the *a priori* of action in the modern enterprise. As long as managers act in accord with it, investor intervention and interference is pointless and even self-defeating. As other critics of late capitalism imply, the objectification of economic rationality in systems of instrumental action and technics make the enterprise self-regulating. The fact that managers, rather than owners, give the direct commands, does not represent true separation of management and ownership. In fact, it indicates the opposite: the increasing correspondence of managerial and investor interests.

Instead of constituting a fundamental transformation, the managerial "revolution" represents an advance in capitalist rationalization. It involves the formation of a professional group that manages production and distribution more efficiently than the investors who reap the greatest financial rewards from it. Managerial capitalism frees large investors to spend more time in the manipulation of their diverse financial holdings and in the social and political activities that promote these interests. Large investors entrust managers with considerable responsibility, but this is always revokable if profitability is not maintained. Chandler's detailed history leads in this direction, but his conceptual analysis diverts the reader from the conclusion that rationalization unifies, rather than separates, management and ownership.

Chandler (p. 6) admits that he does not consider "the work done by the labor force." This omission eliminates the *process* of administration from his analysis. The manager's central duty of inventing, perfecting and regulating routines and devices that rationalize and intensify labor is not described. The concrete history of managerial practice is replaced by a vague terminology emphasizing cost-cutting, value-producing "coordination," but the content of "coordination" is neglected. Managerial regulation of workers is discussed only in an abbreviated way, in the distorted code language of bourgeois economics and administrative theory. Without labor, managerial "coordination," and even Taylorism, are sanctified as scientific productive forces, rather than ways of controlling people. In the vacuum, managerial action appears almost solely responsible for the "advances" of the firm.

Chandler approaches business organization entirely as a productive-distributive apparatus, and *not* as a system of domination. His emphasis is almost entirely upon

3. Ernest Mandel in *Late Capitalism* (Verso, 1978), p. 512n, has an interesting discussion of this subject. See also Albert Z. Carr, "Can an Executive Afford a Conscience?" *Harvard Business Review*, July-August 1970, p. 63.

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the positive relation of "coordination" to productive-distributive efficiency, while the costs of the bureaucratically organized administrative apparatus are never entertained. There is no discussion of red tape, toadyism, and exploitation, nor is the substantive rationality of the firm's planning, allocation and consumption of societal resources analyzed critically. A balanced history of modern business organization would analyze rationalization's dual role in serving both production and domination. Chandler's failure to provide such balance adds further to the impression that managerial organization, as it is now, is indispensable because it delivers the goods.

There is a growing body of literature connecting corporate rationalization and domination — e.g., Gilbert's *Work Without Salvation*, Edward's *Contested Terrain*, Rodgers' *The Work Ethic in Industrial America*, Noble's *America by Design*, Ewen's *Captains of Consciousness*, Braverman's *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, and Mandel's *Late Capitalism*. This literature considers explicitly what Chandler's work ignores. On the other hand, Chandler deals with a dimension of rationalization that is *not* given detailed treatment in other works. He provides a history of corporate organization that documents the rise of the large-scale enterprise and oligopolistic cooperation-competition. While it is true that he ignores the process of domination, he does present a valuable history of the technics, planning and organizational forms of the corporate structure of domination. It is a view from above, describing the means of administration in the administrators' own terms. A critical reader, able to separate "theory" from fact, can put the historical content of this work to good use. However, Chandler's work will deepen the mystification of the many readers who share Chandler's one-dimensional approach that collapses corporate ideology and corporate structure into a false unity. For these readers the book will provide historical "evidence" that modern business organization is substantively rational — that technocratic managerialism inheres in the technical structure of modern organization.

Robert J. Antonio

Lawrence Krader. *The Asiatic Mode of Production: Sources, Development and Critique in the Writings of Karl Marx*. The Netherlands: Van Gorcum & Co., 1975. 454 pages.

Marian Sawer. *Marxism and the Question of the Asiatic Mode of Production*. The Hague: Martinus Nijoff, 1977. 252 pages.

The rise of Asia is probably the most important and least studied phenomenon of modern times. While historical consciousness, like scientific consciousness, often lags behind the revolutions that transform the world and our view of it, the fact that the rise of Asia has been co-extensive with the spread of Communism is a specific feature of the problem. The rise of Asia in the 20th century began with the victory of the October Revolution, gained impetus with the failure of Western "socialist" revolution in 1923 and the ensuing turn of the communist revolution to the East in 1925, was abetted by the weakening of the European state system and the break-up of the colonial system during World War II, and climaxed by the end of the British Empire (most poignantly in India in 1947) and the victory of the Chinese Communist Revolution in 1949.

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The primary task in approaching this phenomenon is to confront the question of Marxism and Asia in general and Marx' concept of the Asiatic mode of production in particular. Unfortunately, those who have attempted to do so have been almost exclusively Marxists and, as such, have obscured Marx' view of Asia and his concept of the Asiatic mode of production when they have not blatantly distorted or falsified it. The two books under review are cases in point.

Lawrence Krader has in most of his writings scarcely disguised his attraction to Marxism and even Communism in its Stalinist form. In *The Asiatic Mode of Production*, he writes: "That Stalin was a great patriot cannot be denied, for he fought against the capitalist encirclement of his country. Mao Tse-tung has defended his country more ably than any one of his predecessors from the time of the Ming dynasty." Moreover, beyond this political sympathy, Krader, less daring than even some of his Soviet colleagues, continues in his book to defend theoretically, albeit with some curious and unexplained inconsistencies, the Stalinist unilinear approach to history.

Marian Sawer states that her purpose in *Marxism and the Question of the Asiatic Mode of Production* (a slightly revised version of her doctoral dissertation) is to abandon "the rather dubious asset of 'historical necessity' " and to liberate Marxism from the "Stalinist sclerosis". She is nevertheless concerned not with a historiography that would utilize the advances made by Marx and Engels but with a "Marxist historiography", which is quite another matter.

In recent years, various Marxists have evolved new variants of intellectual and political obfuscation in dealing with the problem posed by Marx' concept of the Asiatic mode of production. The most important are: 1) the derogation of all Western thinking about Asia from Aristotle to Wittfogel; 2) stressing the relations of production over and above the mode of production in defining the outlines of society and history; and 3) stressing property and property relations over and above production and production relations in determining the evolution of society from one stage to another. The inherent contradiction between 2 and 3, namely property and production and the relations between them, is never resolved. For example, the wholesale attack by Sawer on Western thought about Asia has the twofold purpose of attempting to legitimize "non-Western" forms of "socialism" and downgrading the role of geo-historical and socio-political conditions while upgrading "the role of social choice (or revolutionary consciousness) and social struggle in bringing socialism into being." From his standpoint, Krader writes: "We start from the premise that little remains today of the societies observed by the 17th-century travelers, and in this sense, of the Oriental society in its traditional form; but if our discussion is to be carried forward, not theirs, the indigenous historical texts and the archaeological evidence of the production relations and the forms of property ownership in the regions dealt with ought to be taken up".

Both the Krader and Sawer books appear at the close of the second international debate on the Asiatic mode of production, and, although not dealing specifically with it, both reflect the lingering because inherent intellectual and political difficulties of Marxists in dealing with these questions. In order to understand this historical, theoretical, and political context and to critically appraise Krader's and Sawer's common ground and individual approaches to their subject, it is necessary to sketch briefly the evolution of Marx' approach to Asia and how it has been and is being dealt with by Marxists.

Marx began writing about Asia in articles published in the *New York Daily Tribute* in 1853. He was inspired by the Taiping Rebellion, which seemed to signal the beginning of the revolutionary awakening in China, while at the same time

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reactionary forces were triumphing in Europe following the unsuccessful revolutions of 1848-49. In such articles as "Revolution in China and in Europe", "British Rule in India", and most importantly, "Future Results of British Rule in India", Marx formulated his views on Asia primarily on the writings of Montesquieu and Hegel and the English political economists Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, and Richard Jones. He concluded that the major circumstances characteristic of societies in China and India were the central government's control of great public works, in particular waterworks, and the domestic union of agricultural and manufacturing pursuits in the dispersed, self-contained village communities, which he called "the solid foundation of Oriental despotism".

These articles were brought together and published under the title "Karl Marx on China and India" in both Russian and German by David Riazanov, the first director of the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow, in 1925, paralleling the turn of the communist revolution to the East and the beginning of the first debate on the Asiatic mode of production, which was waged in Germany, China and Japan, but with its main base in the Soviet Union.

Riazanov singled out Marx's emphasis on the "lack of movement" in the social fundament of Oriental society. Referring to Chinese economic relations, Marx had stressed their "capacity for resistance" to change. In this context, he also insisted that in India, and for the first time in Asia, the destruction of Oriental or "Asiatic society" was being brought about by English capitalism. Indeed, only English capitalism had been able to breach the "Chinese Wall" — the "inseparable bond" between agriculture and industry that was inherent in the Asiatic mode of production. Marx went so far as to assert that the English had "produced the greatest and, to speak the truth, the only *social* revolution ever heard of in Asia". Asking, "Can mankind fulfill its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia", he answered: "If not, whatever may be the crimes of England, she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution". Riazanov also referred to other of Marx' articles on China written between 1857 and 1859 — after the outbreak of war between China and England and France. He pointed out that in these articles Marx expressed the hope that the penetration of English capitalism would destroy Asiatic society in China and that the imminent revolution in Europe would gain impetus from the upheaval in the East. In like manner, Stalin, reflecting on the failure of the German October revolution in 1923 and realizing that capitalism had been "stabilized" in the West and that the "colonial question" would play a leading role in the world revolution, stated in a July 1925 interview "On the Revolutionary Movement in the East": "You ask me whether I am not of the opinion that the intensification of the revolutionary movement in China, India, Persia, Egypt and other Eastern countries is a sign that the time is near when the Western Powers will lie down in the grave they have dug for themselves in the East. Yes, I believe it. Revolutionizing the East will give a decisive impulse to the intensification of the revolutionary crisis in the West". Just as Marx foresaw the rise of Asia in the 1850's and provided an historical and theoretical perspective for understanding it, so Stalin greeted the rise of Asia in the 1920's and, disturbed by Marx' perspective, proceeded to impose an historical and theoretical understanding of the phenomenon in line with the political and ideological requirements of a revolution that had already failed in Marx' and Lenin's terms.

What disturbed Stalin most, and what has disturbed Marxists from then until now, is that Marx' concept of the Asiatic mode of production and its political expression, "Oriental despotism", was applied not only to China and India and other countries of the East, but also to Russia. In 1853, Marx and Engels had begun to apply terms like

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"semi-Asiatic" and "semi-Oriental" — "semi-" because Russia had only one of the two formative conditions of "Asiatic society". It lacked the great public waterworks, which were conspicuous in such countries as China and India, but it did have the dispersed, self-contained village communities. According to Engels, Russia was "semi-Asiatic" in her conditions, manners, traditions, and institutions, and he referred to Russia's peasants as "semi-Asiatic" serfs. In Marx' fullest and most systematic analysis, published in a series of articles in *The Free Press* in London in 1856-57 under the title "Revelations of the Diplomatic History of the 18th Century", he pointed to the Byzantine background of Russian society and the effects of the Mongol conquest. According to the founders of Marxism, the Russian village community was a variant of the Oriental village and the Russian government, like the Indian Government, exercised unchecked control over these dispersed rural communities. But even though Russia was "semi-Asiatic" in her production functions, she was nevertheless institutionally a full-blown Oriental despotism. The Tsarist regime was the "crudest form of a state", a "centralized Oriental despotism, the arbitrariness of which we in the West are unable to imagine."

Immediately following his analysis of Russia in *The Free Press,* Marx in 1857-58 wrote the drafts for *Capital* known as the *Grundrisse*, in which he characterized the peculiar Russian development out of the primitive agricultural community as "slavonic," signifying the hybrid nature of its property and production conditions, which were in part "Asiatic" and in part "germanic" or feudal. This distinction did not alter Marx's understanding of the political and institutional character of Russia as an "Oriental despotism." Nevertheless, his focus in the *Grundrisse* on property and property relations in the breakup of the primitive agricultural community played a significant role in the recent debate on the Asiatic mode of production, resulting in a distorted emphasis on an Asiatic form of property rather than on a mode of production — an emphasis that not only evades the fact that the Asiatic mode of production was consistent with more than one form of property and property relations, but also evades the political and institutional peculiarities not only of Russia, but of all "Asiatic" societies.

Plekhanov, Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin all referred at various times to czarist Russia as "Asiatic" or "semi-Asiatic" and all understood by these terms a definite economic, social, and political — i.e., institutional — syndrome. Lenin asserted that Asiatic despotism was rooted in Russia's specific "economic conditions" and he insisted that "the state system of Russia" must be judged "by its economic and political and sociological characteristics in everyday life — by the totality of traits which as a whole revealed the concept of 'Asiatic despotism' ". In the debate between Plekhanov and Lenin at the 1906 Stockholm Party Congress, Plekhanov asserted that if, after victory, the Russian Revolution failed to fulfill its promise, the result would be a restoration of "our old, semi-Asiatic order". Lenin was forced to admit that if the revolution's promise was not fulfilled there could be a resurgence of Russia's "Asiatic despotism", a "restoration of [Russia's] semi-Asiatic condition". According to Lenin, the "relative" guarantees against an "Asiatic restoration" were no bureaucracy, no standing army and no police, but the only "absolute guarantee" was a socialist revolution in the West. In 1913, Stalin, who had been at the Stockholm Congress, referred to Russia as a "semi-Asiatic country" and, in this same context, spoke of Russia's "Asiatic social and political regime".

But with the revolution in Russia imminent, in 1916 Lenin began retreating from the "Asiatic" interpretation of Russia, until by 1919, in his lecture "On the State," he failed to mention Marx at all and cited Engels as the only authority on "contemporary

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Socialism". In an excerpt from his 1919 lecture, much quoted in the recent debate on the Asiatic mode of production to prove the unilinear view of history and be done with Marx' troublesome concept, Lenin said: "I trust that concerning the question of the state you will familiarize yourselves with Engels' work, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. This is one of the basic works of contemporary Socialism, every phrase of which can be accepted with confidence." In this work, Engels comments that "for reasons of space" he was unable to discuss Asiatic conditions.

But after the failure of the socialist revolution in Germany in 1923, and shortly before his death in 1924, Lenin recognized that even the "relative" guarantees had been invalidated by his own decrees and that the very "Asiatic restoration" he had feared was in progress. He drew attention to it in his writings and speeches by applying to post-revolutionary Russia such terms as "semi-Asiatic," "Asiatic" and "bureaucratic." The debate on the Asiatic mode of production that was waged between 1925 and 1931 was initiated both by the turn of the Communist revolution to the East and particularly China and by Stalin's attempts to legitimize both the Russian and the Chinese revolutions by obscuring Lenin's view of an "Asiatic restoration" and ultimately exorcising Marx's concept of the Asiatic mode of production.

Curiously enough, prior to 1925, Soviet scholars were viewing China as a special type of "Asiatic" society, based on the writings of Max Weber and other Western authors, but not on the writings of Marx and Engels, which were still little known. The debate on the Asiatic mode of production which began in 1925, passed through three stages--the first, 1925-27, was in part initiated by Eugene Varga's 1925 article, "Economic Problems of the Revolution in China" and was concerned with whether or not the Chinese Revolution was directed against the remnants of feudalism since in China there was private land-ownership. On November 30, 1926, Stalin delivered his Comintern Speech "On the Prospects of Revolution in China" in which he stated that the Chinese Revolution was directed against "medieval-feudal-remnants", but his power was not yet so consolidated that this became dogma. The second stage of the debate, 1927-29, saw two factions arise. One was led by Karl Radek, who, while vigorously rejecting both the concept and the role of the Asiatic mode of production and maintaining that feudalism had prevailed in China before the modern period, nevertheless insisted that the struggle in China was no longer being fought against feudal remnants but against "commercial capital". The other faction, led by Ludwig Madyar, revived the "Asiatic" thesis that had prevailed until the mid-1920's and, unlike its promoters of that time, drew freely on the writings of Marx and Engels and their concept of an Asiatic mode of production. According to this faction, the Asiatic mode of production ceased to predominate in the Orient after the Europeans became a significant influence, but the gentry class continued to exist. 1929 marked the beginning of a third stage in the debate, not only because a more comprehensive study of the writings of Marx, Engels, Plekhanov, and Lenin was undertaken, but also because it was broadened both in space and in time — in space, to include investigations of the socio-economic formations of India, Iran, Egypt, Afghanistan, and Russia; in time, to include all of world history. China remained the center of the debate, but its social system was now examined within the framework of socio-historical formations in general. But by 1931 Stalin had complete control and at the "Discussion Concerning the Asiatic Mode of Production" held in Leningrad in February 1931, he put an end to the debate on China and to the theory of the Asiatic mode of production. It was said that the concept of the Asiatic mode of production "perverts the methodology of Marxism in fundamental questions of history" and is

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"politically harmful" because it "blurs the question of the survivals of feudalism in the contemporary Orient". Moreover, it was claimed that the concept of an Asiatic society served as a "theoretical basis for Trotskyism": "The Orient, in a very unique way, nevertheless passed through the same stages as did Europe. If many of our comrades have been unable to recognize the existence of feudalism in the Orient to this day, this is the result either of a Trotskyist fog that obscures their vision, or of a simple failure to understand the essential nature of feudalism". The argument against Trotskyism was made because Trotsky had utilized Marx' Asiatic concept and many of those in China who continued to discuss the concept even after it was rejected by the Chinese communists at the 6th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party held in Moscow in 1928, were Trotskyists. But this argument was nevertheless beside the point because it did not change the fact that Marx, Engels, Plekhanov and Lenin had all upheld the concept of the Asiatic mode of production, nor could it change the fact that all of them had applied it not only to China and India and other countries of the East, but also to Russia.

None of the leading defenders of the concept of the Asiatic mode of production were invited to the Leningrad discussion, not Varga or even Madyar. But perhaps most noticeably absent was Wittfogel, who by 1931 had become not only the most prominent analyst of the rise of Marxism in Asia but also the foremost proponent of the concept of the Asiatic mode of production. Beginning in 1924, Wittfogel, drawing on Marx and Weber, expounded a multilinear view of history in which the Asiatic societal formation not only figured prominently but quickly assumed the central place in his work. Over the next few years, he explored in numerous books and articles the origins of a "hydraulic-bureaucratic official-state" in China, India, and other Eastern countries and concerned himself with the question of why Asia did not develop independently to industrial capitalism. In this context, he distinguished between "naturally-conditioned powers of production" and "socially-conditioned powers of production" and reformulated the relation between nature and society that is a key to historical materialism in general and the modes of production in particular. According to Wittfogel, "Man-made irrigation" — Marx's point — and the "powerful hydraulic bureaucracy" — Weber's point — were the two "fundamental characteristics of all Oriental social systems." But Wittfogel's most significant theoretical breakthrough concerned the origin of the "class state" in China, India and Egypt. Using examples from Marx, he recognized that the "managers" of irrigation and flood control had through their functions become "a ruling class". Marx had only recognized the "sovereign" and had failed to note the existence in Asiatic society of a ruling class that controlled the means of production. Weber had spoken only of a "ruling estate". Wittfogel's "class-state" was composed of both the exploiting "administrative-officials" and the "absolute sovereign". Together they comprised the 'ruling class". Wittfogel's exposition of a Marxist sociology of Asiatic society reached a crest in his 1931 book, *Economy and Society in China: Toward the Scientific Analysis of a Great Asiatic Agrarian Society*, in which his most significant contribution was his concept of the Asiatic state as the "dominant agent" of agricultural production. This book made him a "heretic" in Moscow because his concept challenged the Marxist thesis that there is an absolute dichotomy between the economic "foundation" of a society and its political "superstructure" by suggesting that through its regulation of hydraulic installations the Asiatic state actively participated in the process of production: It was an essential element in the mode of production.

Wittfogel's book was translated into Russian, but never published. This translation was, however, circulated among the participants in the 1931 Leningrad discussion.

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Along with Madyar and Varga, Wittfogel was attacked for his "completely false theory of class formation" and his "subservience to the geographic factor". His stress on the "naturally-conditioned powers of production" was sharply criticized and it was asserted that both he and Madyar had been influenced by Plekhanov's "mechanistic position" that the geographical locale determines the development of the productive powers. Wittfogel had formulated a new concept of class, and, because class was "the decisive question for Marxists", it was called "the Achilles heel" of the theory of the Asiatic mode of production. In fact, Wittfogel's new concept of a bureaucracy as a ruling class was only implicit in his heretical suggestion that the Asiatic state participated in the mode of production. He planned to write a second volume dealing primarily with class structure and the state. Moreover, he planned to deal not only with the character of the Chinese state, but of "all 'Asiatic' states" and with the dissolution of Asiatic society and the fateful economic, social and political questions of its transition to a new order.

Wittfogel's second Volume, *Oriental Despotism*, appeared only in 1957, by which time he had broken with the Communist movement (in 1939) and made the discovery (in 1947) in Marx, Engels, Plekhanov and Lenin that Tsarist Russia was a "semi-Asiatic" society with a fully developed "Oriental despotism" and that what Plekhanov and Lenin had both feared — "an Asiatic restoration" — had in fact turned the Soviet Union and the Communist movement into a more pervasive despotism than any Marx and his predecessors had encountered.

Oriental Despotism initiated the most recent "Great Debate" on the Asiatic mode of production. Between 1931 and this new debate, Wittfogel was virtually the only open supporter of the concept of the Asiatic mode of production and had, moreover, become the most renowned and controversial analyst of non-Western societies. Although *Oriental Despotism* was universally acclaimed as a watershed in social science and history, it was greeted by Marxists with silence or, at best, a damning footnote. The official Soviet response was made in a review by the leading Soviet sociologists, Iu.A.Levada, wherein Wittfogel was denounced as the "renegade of Marxism". But the book's impact proved formidable and this fact, combined with the increasing need of Third World revolutionary movements for an ideological explanation of their own countries' conditions consistent with their goals and at the same time free of the politically problematic implications of Marx' "Asiatic" concept, precipitated a new debate.

When the Central Committee of the Moscow-dominated French Communist Party set up the Centre d'Etudes et Recherches Marxistes (CERM) in 1960, the question of the Asiatic mode of production was included in the program of the "Oriental Section", but working sessions were not begun until the spring of 1962 when the Hungarian Sinologist, Ferenc Tökei, arrived in Paris bringing with him his manuscript *On the Asiatic Mode of Production*. A French abstract of this manuscript was distributed to a select group of CERM members, and it revived the debate on the Asiatic mode of production which soon concerned all "pre-capitalistic" areas of the Third World and in the next few years engaged intellectuals of various disciplines in all countries where Marxism plays a role in intellectual life. It reached the Soviet Union in 1964 and thereafter articles and books proliferated into the early 1970's. Outside the Soviet Union, the number of publications involved in or about the debate reached a peak in 1966 and 1967, but anthologies and other contributions continued also into the early 1970s. In all, Wittfogel and his writings were the targets of attack.

The conclusion of the recent debate on the Asiatic mode of production, while provoking interest among a multitude of Marxist and even a few non-Marxist scholars

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in many parts of the world, did not succeed in opening up either Marxism or Asia to an objective consideration of Marx' concept of the Asiatic mode of production among most Marxists since politics still rules over science. During the first debate, the Asiatic mode of production was first denied for modern China (which was said to contain only "remnants of feudalism"), then for imperial China (which was characterized as "feudalism"), until by 1931 ancient China was the last refuge of its supporters. V.V. Struve, the dean of Soviet Studies on the Ancient Orient, became the leading spokesman for the official communist position after the Leningrad discussion. Taking a stand against all the "malicious Aziatchiks", as the supporters of the concept were called, Struve expounded, in a four-hour lecture on "The Problem of the Genesis, Development and Disintegration of Slave Societies in the Ancient Orient" at the Academy of the History of Material Culture in 1933, the official position that the Asiatic mode of production was to be interpreted as a special form of "ancient" slave-holding societies. As Struve put it: "The existence of slavery as a sub-structure within the feudal economic system was the cause of Oriental feudalism assuming a somewhat more stagnant form than Western feudalism, which arose on the ruins of a thoroughly disintegrated socio-economic slave formation". This remained the official position until the new debate began in the 1960's. In 1964, Struve became the leading spokesman of the new official position — that what Marx described as the Asiatic mode of production had in fact preceded "ancient" slave-holding society and was a special form of primitive communal society. This was the thesis that Tökei presented in Paris in the spring of 1962 and that emerged at the "Symposium on L.H. Morgan's Theory of the Periodization of Primitive Society and Modern Ethnography" at the International Congress of Anthropology and Ethnography in Moscow in August 1964, at which Morgan's 1877 book, *Ancient Society*, and Engel's 1884 book, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, In the Light of the Researches of Lewis H.Morgan*, based on Marx' notes, were touted to prove the tenability of the unilinear evolution of human society: "Objective truth is attainable only along the road pioneered by Morgan and Engels". This position harks back to Lenin's 1919 lecture "On the State", which marked his further retreat from the "Asiatic" concept. In one form or another, virtually all of the discussants in the recent debate have presented variations on this theme.

The period of Marxist ideological retrenchment concerning the Asiatic mode of production that has ensued since the new debate was spent has seen the publication of some intellectual curiosities, of which the works of Krader and Sawer are singularly representative. Krader's *The Asiatic Mode of Production* is in fact a companion volume to his edition of *The Ethnological Notebooks of Karl Marx* (first edition, 1972, second edition, 1974). The first volume contains translations of Marx' excerpts from Lewis Henry Morgan, John Budd Phear, Henry Sumner Maine and John Lubbock; the second volume, Marx' excerpts from M.N. Kovalevsky, which are almost equal in importance to those of Morgan. Krader's introduction to the first volume is mainly descriptive. The second volume, which is mainly analytical, contains chapters on "Oriental Society and its Sources," "From the Oriental Society to the Asiatic Mode of Production," "Marx on the Asiatic Mode of Production 1857-1867," "Kovalevsky on the Village Community and Land-ownership in the Orient," "Marx on Phear and Maine," "Engels on the Oriental Society," and "Outline of Principles and Critique of the Asiatic Mode of Production." Since Krader's main talent is his linguistic ability, it is his translations of Marx' notebooks rather than his attempts at analysis that make these two books important.

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Krader's interest in Marxism and the Asiatic mode of production dates from 1947 and his association with Wittfogel. If there is a leitmotif in Krader's development, it appears to be his bent on an intellectual Vatermord since his break with Wittfogel in 1951. In 1948, when Wittfogel gave a seminar on Engels' book, *The Origin of the Family*, he made Lawrence Krader his assistant. During the next three years, Krader worked on various projects for Wittfogel, the most important being a documentary sourcebook tentatively titled "Readings in Oriental Society". Wittfogel conceived it as a companion to his *Oriental Despotism*, whose final draft he was in the midst of writing. It was to contain "a selection of documents characterizing the development of the theory of Oriental society and the ideological struggle against this theory, particularly in the USSR and in countries and groups under the influence of the Soviet Union". Krader worked on translations for the "Russian section", which was all but completed by the end of 1950. Plans for *Readings in Oriental Society* and Krader's association with Wittfogel came to an abrupt halt after Wittfogel's testimony before the McCarran Sub-Committee in August 1951.

Although in *The Asiatic Mode of Production* Krader claims that "since this work has the sources, historical development and critique of Marx' own theory of the Asiatic mode of production for its object it cannot go into the discussion of the theory in the twentieth century" and that "it is not our primary task to engage in controversies with contemporary writers", he does find space for "a brief criticism of Wittfogel". He characteristically never mentions his earlier association with Wittfogel and misrepresents the argument in *Oriental Despotism* concerning the relation between property ownership and the mode of production. On this score, he at one point suggests that Tökei advanced the "same argument" as Wittfogel and at another point comments that "Tökei has written a valuable account of the Asiatic mode of production in the work of Marx". At still another point he writes: "Wittfogel then judges Marx by adopting the standards of Marx himself". There is no mention of Lenin or his debates with Plekhanov at the 1906 Stockholm Congress concerning the danger of an "Asiatic restoration".

It may be coincidence that, like the development of the "Great Debate" in the Soviet Union, Krader began with Morgan, Marx and Engels in his first volume and proceeded to the Asiatic mode of production in the second; but his conclusions, while ideosyncratic, are not heretical from the Soviet point of view. His analysis is a hodge-podge of meta-anthropology and pseudo-Marxism in which he raises theoretical obfuscation to the level of political expedience. As Krader sees it, the Asiatic mode of production "is the forerunner of the system of political economy of capitalism.... At the same time, it points backward to *the transition from primitive economy to political economy and from primitive society to political society*. As such, it is a period in the formation of society and of the evolution of society"; and finally, it "has been destroyed on the impact of colonialism." Krader best characterizes his own approach: "The theory of the Asiatic mode of production is here converted into its opposite." Krader's views are as politically problematic as they are scientifically shoddy.

Unfortunately, Sawer's book, *Marxism and the Question of the Asiatic Mode of Production*, lacks any translations of Marx' writings and thus has even less to recommend it than Krader's works. In her chapter on "The Prehistory of the Marxian Concept of the Asiatic Mode of Production," Sawer contends that "The idea of a typically eastern politico-economic system fundamentally distinct from European forms of social and political development has been seriously undermined by twentieth century intellectual development by the vast increase in the range and complexity of specialized knowledge of the countries concerned, and by the search for new categories

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of social organization which cut cross the distinction between East and West". This statement has no basis in fact and the only proof Sawer offers is her belief that there exists, due in large part to the recent debate on the Asiatic mode of production, a "post-Stalinist emphasis in Marxism on the openess of history". It is precisely this alleged emphasis that she links with her own on the role of social choice and revolutionary consciousness. But Sawer's "revolutionary consciousness" is continually getting in the way of scholarly analysis.

One of Sawer's principal contentions is that Marx' concept of the Asiatic mode of production or "the idea of the particularist nature of Asiatic society" that Marx took over from Montesquieu, the Physiocrats and the British political economists, is based on the idea of "European superiority". She is especially exercised by Montesquieu's "bias", as evidenced in his concept of Oriental despotism. One may of course call a preference for democracy over despotism a "bias". But such arguments, whether propounded by Marxists or others, can hardly be taken seriously. The geographical and historical conditions that allowed the development of feudalism and created the social and political pre-requisites for the development of industrial capitalism in Western Europe have nothing to do with an idea of European superiority. Likewise, recognition of the geographical and historical conditions that brought into being the Asiatic mode of production and created the social and political bonds that prevented the development of industrial capitalism in Asia has nothing to do with an idea of Asian inferiority. Such terminology is unhistorical and unscientific and has no place in the analyses of socio-historical development or stagnation.

Sawer does recognize that Richard Jones exerted "the greatest single influence on Marx' idea of Oriental despotism" and that the articles Marx wrote in 1853 for *The New York Daily Tribune* provided "the working model of Asiatic society which was to serve Marx for the rest of his life." But then, poor Marx, in Sawer's view, was following the "bias" of Montesquieu and all those other wrong-headed thinkers stretching back to Aristotle. In her chapter on "The Marxian Concept of the Asiatic Mode of Production," Sawer draws some peculiar distinctions, such as "already in 1853, thanks to his acquaintance with political economy, 'Oriental despotism' signified for Marx not so much a *political* phenomenon, as a non-progressive *economic* form marked by state intervention in the economy". This manifestly un-Marxist contention is used against Marx for the stated objective of liberating "Marxist historiography". In line with this, Sawer supposedly achieves the *coup de grace* by stating that "basically Marx never added very much to the model of Oriental despotism he derived from the political economists, apart from his explanation of the origin of the system, which he had already arrived at through Engels in 1853".

We read in Sawer that "one of the most important reasons why Marx shunned the analogy between Oriental society and Western feudalism was that his approach to social analysis was couched in terms of Eastern society, the institutions of benefits existing there did not have the same potential which had been intrinsic to their Western counterparts, and hence they were of a completely different character". Here Sawer's and Krader's analyses meet in the magical word "potential". But Krader's version is even more fantastic. He writes: "The system of the Asiatic mode of production is more abstract than the capitalist. The relation of the Asiatic mode of production to the capitalist is that of the potentiality to the realization of the potentiality". This line of reasoning, if such it may be called, misses Marx' point entirely. If the geo-economic and geo-historical circumstances in Asia precluded the independent development of industrial capitalism, wherein lies the potentiality? Only an historical eco-system not requiring large-scale waterworks and-or a political

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infrastructure not controlled by Oriental despotism could be said to have "potentiality". According to Marx, the potential for development existed only if and when the Asiatic mode of production (Oriental despotism) was broken by external contact with Western capitalism. Both Krader's and Sawer's approaches to the Asiatic mode of production are based not only on the derogation of the legacy of Western thought about Asia but also on the distortion of Marx's as well. Their predicament is transparent. They cannot accept Marx' concept of the Asiatic mode of production, but they also cannot totally abandon it. Thus, they must superficially criticize Marx in order to create the illusion of a "New Marxist historiography".

It is at times difficult to determine at just which points Sawer simply misunderstands Marx's concept of the Asiatic mode of production or when she simply misunderstands history. For example, she writes, "Marx's analysis of the non-Western world was far too closely tied to the earlier concepts of Oriental despotism for the notion of an Asiatic feudalism to be acceptable to him, except in the special case of Japan.... Otherwise, Marx categorically denied the relevance of his categories of pre-capitalist Western society to non-European areas." The fact that Japan experienced, for particular geo-historical reasons, a feudal development similar to Western Europe, while China did not, is recognized by most historians who do not subscribe in any way to Marxism or to the concept of an Asiatic mode of production. One does not have to be a Marxist to recognize patterns of development, their variety and even causality in history. Such nomothetic considerations were not unknown in the nineteenth century among many non-Marxist historians and are being recognized today by many anthropologists.

In her chapter on "The Asiatic Mode of Production in Relation to the Place of Geographical Factors in Historical Materialism," Sawer oversimplifies Marx's approach to this question by reducing his concept of nature primarily to "geographical factors." She also oversimplifies Plekhanov and misrepresents Wittfogel's approach, both under the rubric "geographical deviation." It is true that "Plekhanov occasionally erred in the direction of an overestimation of the role of geographical factors," but it is untrue that "he did not go so far as certain twentieth-century Marxists, who have argued that the geographical factor becomes of greater rather than of lesser importance with the growth of the material forces of production. The first important exponent of this view was K.A. Wittfogel." Plekhanov's concept of nature was always more geographically determined than was Wittfogel's concept. When Marx spoke of the "receding of the natural barriers," he did not see them as disappearing through the socialization of the means of production. Moreover, Wittfogel's argument about the "actualization" of natural conditions was never, as Sawer writes, that they became "more important", but only that their function, having been "transformed", assumed a different role in the process of production. Sawer's statement that "Basically... Wittfogel placed much more emphasis on the interaction between man and his geographical environment, which developed under the impact of man's transforming and actualizing activity, than on the inner laws of development or material production and its corresponding social institutions", again misses the point entirely because Wittfogel never divorced the interaction between man and his geographical environment and the inner laws of development of material production and its corresponding social institutions. The main problem in Sawer's account is that she is so blinded by Plekhanov's "geographical" understanding of the role of the natural factor in history that she is unable to correctly evaluate either Marx' or Wittfogel's more complex and (particularly in Wittfogel's case) more differentiated understanding of the relation between nature and historical materialism.

Sawer's comparison and contrast of "parallels between the service-state concept

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evolved by the nineteenth century Russian historians and Marx' concept of Oriental society" in her chapter titled "Marxist Perspectives on Russian History: The Practical Application of the Concept of the Asiatic Mode of Production" is the most valid and valuable part of her book. But even here, there are problems. She succeeds in drawing attention to Plekhanov's neglected and perhaps most important book, *History of Russian Social Thought*, but in so doing she offers a contrived presentation of his argument concerning the "Tatarization" of Russian history. Moreover, referring to the late Russian historian George Vernadsky's discussion of the period of Tatar domination, she comments, "Even K.A. Wittfogel, because of his very desire to correlate despotism and hydraulic agriculture (sic), has to some extent provided a similarly 'idealist' (sic) account of the impact of the Tatars on Russia".

Sawer's idea of what is an "idealist" interpretation of Russian history is based on her own rejection of Marx' concept of the Asiatic mode of production. She does admit that "Plekhanov's own political perspective was in fact closely tied to his mature interpretation of Russian history, . . . the belief expressed theoretically in his adoption of Marx's concept of Asiatic society." Unlike Krader, she also mentions Plekhanov's debate with Lenin concerning the belief in the possibility of "a restoration of 'our politico-economic Chineseness', a possibility Plekhanov associated with the Bolshevik policies of nationalization of land." But Sawer's realistic assessment of Plekhanov's perspective is offset by her denial, or more accurately stated, her misrepresentation of Lenin's perspective. She writes: "Although Lenin had excerpted passages from Marx and Engels' correspondence on the subject, he never himself used the concept for analytic purposes. He did however frequently use the term 'semi-Asiatic' as a rhetorical flourish to convey his despair at the 'backwardness' or 'barbarism' of Russia. It can be seen from the much-quoted passages in, for example, "The Right of Nations to self-determination' (1914) that where Lenin actually uses the term 'Asiatic despotism' it is only as a synonym for a patriarchal pre-capitalist social and political system". The first part of this statement harks back to Soviet pronouncements at the end of the first debate on the Asiatic mode of production in Leningrad in 1931, the second part is consistent with Soviet pronouncements at the end of the recent debate. Sawer gives no indication that Lenin himself used the argumeent about the danger of an "Asiatic restoration" in Russia before the revolution or that he returned to it at the end of his life.

Sawer's dependence on Soviet sources is as substantial as it is selective. She writes: "propaganda purposes apart, there is great interest among Soviet scholars in the possibility opened up by the 'Asiatic' concept for a new Marxist historiography; an historiography which does not apply concepts to non-Western history which are appropriate only to West-European history; an historiography which also awards a greater significance to the role of non-economic factors in the economic infra-structure. This is one aspect of the present quest taking place in Soviet historical institutes for a new and satisfying framework in which to synthesize the rapidly increasing store of specialized empirical knowledge about the countries outside Europe." This contention exposes the sham of Sawer's treatise. It is precisely Marx, in his concept of the Asiatic mode of production, who took non-Western history on its own terms and, like his predecessors (e.g., Montesquieu) and successors (e.g., Wittfogel), attempted to understand its nature. It is precisely Sawer, in her prejudices against Western social thought concerning the "particularity" of Asia, who is refusing to take non-Western history on its own terms.

In the concluding section of her final chapter, "The Asiatic Mode of Production in Relation to the Marxist Analysis of Progress and Modernization", flamboyantly titled

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"The Dynamics of Moderization in the Non-Western World: Towards a New Marxist Historiography", Sawer cavalierly remarks: "The concept of the absolute stagnation of the Asiatic formation has been eliminated". Quite aside from the fact that neither Marx' nor Wittfogel's concepts of stagnation in Asia was "absolute", Sawer's purpose in destroying this windmill also is transparent. By rejecting what she calls "Marx' Western European perspective, she expatiates that "non-Western forms of historical development may have their own dynamics, which although overshadowed during the rapid industrial expansion of Western Europe in the nineteenth century are now reasserting themselves in the form of self-proclaimed non-Western paths of development". Having said this, she must necessarily reiterate that "the achievement of the kind of socialist society which Marx foreshadowed will depend largely on subjective factors centering on social choice, social consciousness and social struggle." But by choice, consciousness and struggle, Sawer will never succeed in reconciling Marx and history with her alleged "new Marxist historiography."

The rise of Asia in the twentieth century, the rise of Marxism in Asia and Marx's concept of the Asiatic mode of production raise fundamental questions about society and history that should be of prime concern to all social scientists and historians, and no analyst approaching these questions can ignore the scientific advances made by Marx or the writings of Marxists on these questions. But until science rules over politics, these questions must be answered by analysts willing to take Marx as well as non-Western societies on their own terms and to critically appraise the writings of Marxists who are unwilling and-or unable to do so.

G.L. Ulmen

Donald J. Munro. *The Concept of Man in Contemporary China*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1977.

Munro sets out to describe the "enduring assumptions" about human nature and the "proper function of government" common to Confucian China and "Chinese Marxist thought" (p. vii). He chooses a form of exposition that he judges specially suited for "an audience reared in a liberal democracy" rather than in "a monarchy or another socialist state." There is no doubt of the success of the limited aim. But the form, perhaps coupled with Munro's own liberal-democratic assumptions, prevents the book from illuminating the contemporary scene in the way it might otherwise have done.

The central "enduring assumption" that Munro treats he calls "clustering." This, he explains, "involves combinations of three mental phenomena: knowing, feeling, and promptings to act. Knowing involves both understanding the distinctions between things in the natural world that correspond to distinctions marked by language and recognizing moral principles. Some of these distinctions are regarded by the Chinese as normative" (p. 26). He contrasts this view with that common in the European tradition where many forms of knowledge are regarded as value free. He traces clustering back through Wang Yangming (born 1472), Zhu Xi (1130), to Mengzi (Mencius, born 372 BC). Rather than questions of certainty and doubt, or the relation between knowledge and belief which European philosophers treated, Munro argues that Chinese philosophers were primarily concerned with two different problems. First: "what we can learn through studying things that will tell us both how things are naturally

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structured to act and how they should act" (p. 28). And second, "what happens to a knower as a result of his efforts to know that enables him to behave properly when alone or toward other people and things?" Munro sums up their approach by saying, "Those who are interested in knowing are interested in making the right evaluations and in guides to action" (*ibid.*).

Munro discusses the Neo-Confucian process of self-cultivation and argues for a translation of the Chinese concepts of *yi* (intention) and *zhi* (will) as "promptings to act" (p. 34). He concludes that for Chinese in this tradition "to know a moral rule was generally also personally to accept it for oneself" (p. 33), a position he linked to the Socratic position, "he who knows the good does the good" (p. 35). But the Chinese stress was on selfish desires rather than ignorance as the source of evil.

Munro then goes on to show how this clustering of knowing, feeling and acting is present in Chinese communist thought. He analyzes such works as Mao's *On Practice* and a production by psychologists "associated with Peking Normal University" (p. 38), but he does not mention the field of thought reform of prisoners. Yet clustering has been evident in the accounts of prisoners from the Richards and other foreigners of the early 1950s through to the most recent account by Bao Ruowang and R. Chelminski (*Prisoner of Mao*, 1973).

The second major concept that Munro discusses, the malleability of man, he regards as a "significant rupture" with China's past. For him, Confucian ideas of man's innate nature embody a fixed view. He cites attacks on "humanism" in attempts to rouse class consciousness and class struggle. Chinese "feelings of compassion for all others," he claims, "are opposed to the doctrine of malleability" and "inhibit the transformation of men's minds" (pp. 60-61). Turning to the efforts of teachers to improve their pupils, Munro refers to Mao's concept of dialectical contradiction and the related concept of man's dual nature. The instructor's job, Munro writes, "is to discover the positive and build on it in order to overcome the negative" (p. 70). While there is a certain plausibility in all this, the break with the Confucian past seems to be less significant. From early times, thinkers have stressed the importance of education and study. The long-studied anthology of Zhu Xi, the *Jin si lu,* is not alone in suggesting that "with the right education anyone could be a sage." Or is this, to use a favorite expression of Munro's, simply an example of "muddle"?

Back on firmer ground, Munro devotes a whole chapter to the use of models, showing how their use is rooted in early Confucian writings. Sentences like the following abound: "When one sees a worthy, one should think of equalling him; when the ruler, as a father, a son, and a brother is a model, then the people imitate him" (p. 136). Munro makes the important point that the use of models in matters of norms serves to "perpetuate authoritarian tendencies" (p. 155). He adds that there appears to be some confusion in the notion that the pursuit of honor is morally acceptable while the pursuit of material incentives is regarded as "selfish."

The weakest part of the book is the chapter on "Equality and the Content of Fosterage." Munro claims that "the ideal that Americans and many Europeans would be most likely to describe with the term 'equality' is discussed by the Chinese in terms of 'eliminating the division of labor' and turning all people into 'all-round persons' " (p. 159). The fundamental Marxist goal of eliminating *class* differences is lost in a welter of references to "status differences" and "status inequalities." Of course, there is a lot of talk in China about respect for the work of this or that group, and about "he who does whatever work the Party gives him" being "a good comrade" (p. 171). But for socialists the interesting questions begin with exploring Mao's conception of class

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struggle and the persistence of classes in the long period he saw required for any transition to communism. What did he mean by the petty bourgeoisie when, at the 10th plenum of the Eighth Central Committee of the Party, he said: "the petty bourgeoisie exists and continually generates a bourgeoisie" (Schram, *Mao Tse-tung Unrehearsed*, p. 189)? How did Mao link this conception with that of cadres taking part in manual labor regularly, and of workers taking part in management? In class terms these are questions of power and action, but for Munro they appear to be only aids to attitudes (pp. 172-173).

In the same chapter, Munro takes up the liberal concepts of equality of rights and equality of opportunity. He explains, usefully, that the Chinese term translated as selfishness has different connotations from that of the English word. Counterposed to "public" it normally involved the perception of the self in relation to the wider social whole rather than any question of avariciousness (p. 162). However, while this helps us to read a number of Chinese writings with greater understanding, it does not justify the cavalier treatment of the growth of a concept of right in this century, perhaps especially linked with the growing class consciousness of the petty bourgeoisie and cadre class, which has so clearly re-emerged to claim its interests in the name of the rule of law since the death of Mao. It is misleading, however, to say, as Munro does, that constitutional guarantees of the right of freedom of speech and assembly, the right to post *dazibao* (wall posters), or to go on strike are "even more hollow than those in the Soviet Union. There they are at least backed up by some comprehension and some acceptance of human rights" (p. 163). The section on equality of opportunity is equally unhelpful. Efforts to improve rural education, however successful they might be, do little to alter the lack of actual and possible rotation of jobs which alone would bring some socialist meaning into this liberal concept.

A second major weakness of the book is Munro's treatment of the Soviet Union. Brief comments are inserted into the different chapters as a foil to explaining contemporary China. In the space available these sections would have been better left out, for Munro only gets himself into trouble through problems of the selection of period and authenticity to make the comparison with China. The important distinction between the Soviet Union's long flirtation with the concept of "polytechnical education" and Mao's preference for "combining education with productive labor" is not really brought out. Munro cites Nicholas De Witt to suggest that almost anything has been "passed off as polytechnical" (p. 116), and he notes the labor requirement cause of Khrushchev's 1958 introduction of essentially *mono*-technical training in secondary schools (p. 170). But that is not enough. In neither country was it ever a major consideration that "with exposure [to labor] would come acceptance of the equal importance of each occupation" (p. 170).

In conclusion, Munro presents an interesting and useful discussion of some classical Confucian concepts that still play a role in Chinese Communist ideology and practice. But the treatment of Chinese society is too superficial and influenced by Munro's particular approach to set the "enduring assumptions" in any definitive framework. It is a book that should be read, but, as a past Chinese revolutionary was fond of saying, "with problems in mind."

Ronald Bain

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Dmitri Shostakovich. *Testimony: The Memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich.* as related to and edited by Solomon Volkov. Translated from the Russian by Antonia W. Bouis. New York: Harper and Row, 1979. 289 pages.

The black cover and red end papers that contain Dmitri Shostakovich's memoirs were no doubt intended by the publishers to symbolize the book's troubled content. Largely through Shostakovich's own words, this book unfolds a grim picture of the existence of a highly gifted composer before, during and after Stalin's regime. It is a tale of blood, terror, intrigue (often of the most petty sort) and humiliation. Since the memoirs are an attempt to explain frequently baffling events, *Testimony* occasionally obscures its subject when it means to illuminate it. To be sure, we now know more of Shostakovich's creative life than before, but one finishes the book with the realization that the reasons a man gives for his actions are sometimes not objectively sought for motives but rather curtains that are drawn around personal events in order to make the present meaningful or, at least, less futile.

The book would have been impossible but for the readily confessed devotion of Solomon Volkov, who became a fan of the composer in 1960 and gradually thereafter a fast friend, willing secretary, and unexpected psychologist. It must have been a strange relationship for this young Jewish musicologist, once a senior editor of *Sovetskaya Muzyka,* the official musicological journal of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, now a research associate at the Russian Institute at Columbia University. I say strange because Volkov had to undertake one of the most difficult tasks that an interviewer can assume, that of helping to release from his subject's mind a tortuous flood of memories that practical wisdom had successfully buried in order to remain sane and alive. While this process of therapy was indeed painful for Shostakovich (particularly evident in the elliptic prose style of Chapter 1), in the end he seemed to appreciate it, as witnessed by a short addendum that he inscribed on a photograph he gave to Volkov. The ordeal was personally worthwhile for Shostakovich if, by witnessing again the mountains of corpses, "others would find something instructive in these simple tales" (276).

If the memoirs are accurate, and there is no reason to believe they aren't, Shostakovich will emerge as the most important Soviet composer in the 20th century. This is not to say that he always represents the image of Soviet musical culture that the Party's Central Committee would have wished to create. In fact, what the Central Committee did project as Soviet music was done at the expense of all its composers. It is, rather, to state that a true picture of Soviet musical culture is one of constant internal turmoil, frequent caprice, and ideological reversals that Shostakovich managed to live through and finally — though painfully — criticize from the mere vantage point of a survivor. Or, in musical terms, it is to say that every time the Seventh Symphony ("Leningrad") is played, somebody may at last avail himself of the opportunity to understand the work's true meaning: it is not about the struggle to save Leningrad from the Germans, as the Party officials eagerly announced, but is a picture of a Leningrad "that Stalin destroyed and that Hitler merely finished off" (156).

There arises a question that the aestheticians of music ought to take seriously — especially those who like to parade their erudition behind the banner of "the intentional fallacy."[1] The question is: What can music mean? Or, as Shostakovich states it:

1. That is, the design or intention of the artist is neither available nor desirable in understanding a work of art or evaluating it. Once this problem had been excised from the sphere of aesthetics, the positivist critic can get on with the elements of unity, variety and intensity or whatever other qualities are thought to like solely within the object and constitute its meaning.

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"Meaning in music — that must sound very strange for most people. Particularly in the West. It's here in Russia that the question is usually posed: What was the composer trying to say, after all, with this musical work? What was he trying to make clear? The questions are naive, of course, but despite their naivete and crudity, they definitely merit being asked. And I would add to them, for instance: Can music attack evil? Can it make man stop and think? Can it cry out and thereby draw man's attention to various vile acts to which he has grown accustomed? to the things he passes without any interest?" (234).

To be sure, music means different things to many people and nothing to some, but it was meaning in music that brought about the deaths of those Soviet composers who did not mean enough or meant the wrong thing or were not clever enough to mean anything at all. Perhaps, as Soviet critics frequently note, "meaningless" music *is* the product of bourgeois decadence, and in this light the sticky and ambiguous caveat of "formalism" is a just criticism of music whose expressed *raison d'être* is to be a "purely sonic form" rather than a tonal vehicle of human expression through the medium of notes and rhythms. This does not mean that the issues Soviet composers and musicologists confronted were trivial or without real aesthetic substance, but, rather, that Soviet artists historically faced philosophic problems of art to which Western musicians had brought different intellectual and social frames of reference. The Soviet Union, for example, had no historical, purely "classic" phase (18th-century music was imported from Western Europe and native classic music is meagerly represented) upon which to hang timeless labels of abstract perfection; and Soviet music, while assuming that some sort of model for Socialist Realism must indeed exist, has discovered from Lenin to the 1970s that concrete general notions for such music in practice are as complex and problematic as any economic Five-Year Plan. Thus, in lieu of a so-called "classical" base, the foundations of Soviet aesthetics are largely embedded in a vigorous period of native music making that influenced subsequent musical creativity — the 19th century, replete with eager borrowings from West European nationalism, naturalism, and readily espoused human subjectivity. It was upon this platform that Soviet aesthetics inadvertently took its cue, and 20th-century composers survived or fell depending upon their abilities, consciously or unconsciously, to appropriate it. There is another fact of great significance that I shall underscore later with particular focus on Shostakovich — tonality itself. By this is meant the actual sonic consciousness that the composer inherits as a student of music within society and both preserves and annuls as an active agent within the expressive, communicative act. It is a fundamental matter, but it has never been properly understood by Soviet musicologists (nor by American ones either), and there is no indication in his memoirs that Shostakovich, musically speaking, realized that the enemy of Socialist Realism (which I think he trusted and supported) was not twelve-tone or dodecaphonic music as such, but the uncontrollable activity of human consciousness to express itself today differently than it had yesterday because reality (and consciousness with it) had changed and would not regress.

Even with a studied attempt to avoid vanity, Shostakovich emerges from the pages of his memoirs as something of a *Wunderkind*. Born in 1908, at a turning point when "people stopped believing in the tsar" (8), he was present at Finland Station, but not very much aware of the momentous return of the exiled Lenin. Apparently as a child of nine, he was too engrossed in learning — within the space of two years — all the preludes and fuges of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*. Reports like this (xxii) always unnerve the average human being, even the musician. He matriculated early at the Petrograd Conservatory, but only after the two other major figures of 20th-century Russian music had already left — Prokofiev via Siberia and America, and Stravinsky via Paris. He

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wrote a symphony for his graduation in 1925, the First, which enjoyed an instantaneous and wild success, and its reputation spread rapidly. Bruno Walter conducted it in Berlin in 1927, and Arturo Toscanini (whom Shostakovich never met but whose recordings he says he hated) conducted it in 1931 in the United States.

The mid-1920s were a period of healthy musical experimentation as a result of the program of the NEP in the newly organized republics. There were frequent premiers of compositions by Hindemith, Krenek, *Les Six*, the by-now "foreign" Russians Prokofiev and Stravinsky, and Bartok. Hindemith and Bartok visited Leningrad, played their works, and the young Shostakovich was clearly excited by their music. By the late 1920s, the government's honeymoon with the artists was gradually evolving into an uneasy marriage of untested wills. Distant from the poverty that the Revolution had inherited and exacerbated in these early years, Shostakovich had not suffered very much. All this was to change.

Shostakovich's major opera, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk District* (now available in a superior new recording), was completed in 1932 and premiered in Leningrad in 1934. It achieved an unparalleled success for a contemporary work. It was given 36 times in Leningrad and enjoyed 94 performances in Moscow in two seasons.

Enter Joseph Stalin. Stalin saw *Lady Macbeth* in 1936; several days later he "reviewed" it in *Pravda* (Jan. 28, 1936). "The listener is flabbergasted from the first moment of the opera by an intentionally ungainly, muddled flood of sounds. Snatches of melody, embryos of musical phrases, drown, escape and drown once more in crashing, gnashing, and screeching. Following this 'music' is difficult, remembering it is impossible" (xxix). There has always been some question in the West as to who wrote the "Muddle Instead of Music" article in *Pravda*, a confusion still cited in the most recent edition of *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*. But Shostakovich was certain of the article's authorship. "The day before, *Pravda* had printed the leader and teacher's brilliant comments on the outlines of new history books, and he talked about muddles there, too" (114).[2] Within ten days another article appeared, written somewhat "more grammatically" but no less critically, this time about Shostakovich's socialist ballet *Bright Stream*. From that moment Shostakovich was "stuck with the label 'enemy of the people,' and I don't need to explain what the label meant in those days. Everyone still remembers that" (115).

Gradually, Shostakovich, who never saw himself as a political composer, became the most political of all, simply because Stalin did not "remove" him. He watched him instead and began removing his friends. In 1937, Soviet Marshal Mikhail Tukhachevsky, a patron of Shostakovich, was shot on the pretext of false documents supplied by the Gestapo that named Tukhachevsky as a German spy. Shostakovich's musicologist friend and mentor Nicolai Zhilayev was a friend of Tukhachevsky. He was taken away. So were organist Nicolai Vygodsky, director Boleslav Pshibyshevsky, and musicologist Dima Gachev, although young and ambitious Tikon Khrennikov, head of the Composers' Union of the USSR since its First Congress (1948), said that musicians were not being touched by Stalin's reign of terror. Prokofiev's *Semyon Kotko* was put into production at the Stanislavsky Opera Theater by Vsevolod Meyerhold, a friend and

2. Shastakovich's certainty cannot ultimately create a historical fact. Even if Stalin did write and sign the article on new history texts and use the word "muddle" or "chaos" therein, this does not prove that he wrote the subsequent article on Lady Macbeth in *Pravda*. The Soviet Union has been no less aware of sloganism than have been the ad makers of American commercials: 8-foot neon signs on the top of many buildings flicker on and off in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, etc., nightly flashing "Slava Trudu" until dawn. This is to say that the "leader and teacher's" very manner of communication and slogan utterances were intentionally picked up by writers and carefully woven into the linguistic consciousness of every available mode of communication.

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patron of Shostakovich. It was Meyerhold's last work in the theater, but he never finished it. He was arrested in the middle of production and disappeared without a trace. "Everyone wrote denunciations then," notes Shostakovich. "Composers probably used music paper and musicologists used plain" (122).

Curiously, while the sorrow and pain caused by these repressions could not be discussed openly, they could still be heard — in the form of music. It was during the height of the mass terror that the Fifth Symphony was composed and performed in 1937 in Leningrad, a city that suffered particularly cruel repressions. Many members of the audience wept at the premier. When would it come time for Shostakovich, the known "enemy of the people" who still wrote such beautiful music? "Even before the war," says Shostakovich, "in Leningrad there probably wasn't a single family who hadn't lost someone, a father, a brother, or if not a relative, then a close friend.... Everyone feared everyone else, and the sorrow oppressed and suffocated us" (135).

Not too curiously, the war offered a form of relief from the bottled-up fear and pain of the Leningrad repressions. Sorrow could become a common one. "We could talk about it, we could cry openly, cry for our lost ones. People stopped fearing tears.... It was still hard, but you could breathe. That's why I consider the war years productive for the arts. This wasn't the situation everywhere, and in other countries war probably interferes with the arts. But in Russia — for tragic reasons — there was a flowering of the arts" (136).

We know now that the Seventh Symphony was synthesized in Shostakovich's head before the Germans reached Leningrad. It too was a reflection of the pre-war fate of the composer and the city. But at the hands of the Party machine, the Seventh became a piece of propaganda much like the opening notes of the Beethoven Fifth Symphony for the Allies and Wagner's music for the Germans. The first audiences did not connect the famous march from the Seventh's first movement with the German invasion of Leningrad, but the Party writers did. Alexei Tolstoy wrote, "The Seventh Symphony arose from the conscience of the Russian people, who unwaveringly accepted mortal combat with evil forces" (136n). On July 19, 1942, Toscanini conducted the radio premier in America; the work was heard by millions. The next day, Shostakovich's picture appeared on the cover of *Time*, dressed in a fireman's helmet as a symbol of Russian resistance to Hitler's armies. The fate of the Seventh was sealed. The current *Baker's Dictionary* still interprets "the theme of the Nazis, in mechanical march time, rising to monstrous loudness, only to be overcome and reduced to a pathetic drum dribble by a victorious Russian song" (159).

But when the Eighth Symphony was performed in 1943, it was, Shostakovich says, "openly declared counter-revolutionary and anti-Soviet" (140). As Volkov notes, while the work was censored, "Shostakovich's world fame, and particularly the political ramifications of the Seventh, prevented an open attack" (140n). This symphony's negative reception, however, was but a prelude to the "business of the Ninth." "When the war against Hitler was won, Stalin went off the deep end" (140). Everybody was praising Stalin, and Shostakovich was expected to join in by composing the victory symphony, the Ninth: Stalin found the number auspicious. To camouflage his feelings, Shostakovich pretended to be composing an apotheosis in sound. When the Ninth was premiered, Stalin was incensed. There was no chorus, there were no soloists, there wasn't even a dedication.

Shostakovich's stubbornness cost him dearly, and his fate must be seen within a complex state of affairs that evolved in the aftermath of the war but which had been brewing even before the *Pravda* articles of 1936. When Maxim Gorky delivered the Party's ideological position on literature at the First Writers' Congress in 1934, with him

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on the platform was Andrei Zhdanov. Twelve years later, while Stalin himself had set the tone in a series of post-war speeches beginning in 1945, characterized by inflated national pride, clear anti-Western feelings, and renewed stress on ideological discipline, the principal architect for the resolutions enacted by the Central Committee was Zhdanov. Placed in charge by Stalin, Zhdanov drafted the three Party Resolutions of 1946 concerning literature, theater, and film; they proved to be prophetic for the harsh criticism of Soviet music two years later. Thus, while the immediate occasion for the "historic resolution" of 1948 was a vicious attack on Vano Muradeli's opera *The Great Friendship*, what Zhdanov finally accomplished was a clean ideological sweep of Soviet art in general. In addition to Muradeli, the 1948 resolution also named Miaskovsky, Prokofiev, Shostakovich and Khachaturian as the chief offenders against people's art. But Stalin also instructed Zhdanov to draw up a list of all "formalist" composers who had failed to glorify the state. "'They put some names on, crossed others off. Only two names had the top spots sewn up. My name was number one, and Prokofiev's number two" (146). The workers dutifully wrote letters to the papers, thanking "the Party for sparing them the torture of listening to the symphonies of Shostakovich" (146).

But Stalin still had to deal with the West. The Allies ignored the "historic resolution" and continued playing the very music of Shostakovich and Prokofiev that had earned them the title of enemy of the people. The "leader and teacher" was deflated. Since the Allies had started a peace movement, Stalin decided to join in: it would help cover up his acts of terror against his own people. He would send the West what it wanted, and ordered Shostakovich to attend the Cultural and Scientific Congress for World Peace in New York. He would be forced to read a paper he had not written about an aesthetic position he did not support.

It is difficult to believe that Shostakovich felt secure enough to refuse, but he initially did. "It was humiliating for me to take part in a spectacle like that. I was a formalist, a representative of the antinational direction in music. My music was banned, and now I was supposed to go and say that everything was fine" (147). The telephone conversation between Stalin and Shostakovich is surely one of the strangest ever (147-148). Shostakovich finally agreed, came to America, and read the prepared statement. He expected to be killed when he returned home. Later he felt that it was not the American trip that saved his life, but the music he composed for Stalin's propaganda films. Young Khrennikov, who had moved into a strategic position, believed that Shostakovich's days were numbered. When Khrennikov learned that Shostakovich had been commissioned to compose music for several important films, he wrote a complaint to the Party's Central Committee. What he did not realize was that Stalin himself had chosen Shostakovich to compose the music for those very films. Here, Shostakovich describes the second most memorable phone conversation of his life, this time between Stalin and Khrennikov, who was so totally disoriented by a call from the chairman that he quite forgot that Shostakovich was in the room and overheard it all (150).

Stalin died on March 5, 1953, the same day, symbolically, as did the number two "enemy of the people," Prokofiev. Few Soviet citizens expected changes in the Party's top organization to occur as fast as they did. On July 10, Lavrenti Beria, who had been for years head of the security police, was arrested. He was executed two days before Christmas, along with a number of co-defendants. Shostakovich's Tenth Symphony was premiered in Leningrad on Dec. 17, and in Moscow on Dec. 29. While the work was brought under sharp attack and critically debated, in 1954 Shostakovich nevertheless received the highest artistic honor of the Soviet Union, "People's Artist of the USSR."

Musicologists have now to reconcile Shostakovich's memoirs with his public statements about his post-Stalin works and — as people's artist — about the Party's

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ideological stance on music during the cultural thaw and Khrushchev's subsequent reversals against a growing tide of modernism. As Boris Schwarz notes in *Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia 1917-1970,* "rarely has an author expressed himself with more self-effacement" (279) than did Shostakovich about his Tenth Symphony. The cultural honeymoon that artists enjoyed after Stalin's death reveals Shostakovich as no longer a fighter at the front among the gradually emerging, free-thinking intellectuals. Instead, he mouths a string of statements that emphasize the civil and ideological obligations of composers to avoid anti-humanistic trends that are "entirely alien to Socialist Realism" (Schwarz, 336). As work after work was played in the West, it seemed that the once aggressive Shostakovich had musically capitulated to the Party's wishes. While our initial interpretations of the Fifth and Seventh Symphonies, according to the memoirs, were incorrect, at least the mistaken enemy had been the Germans, who were certainly worth despising. But the new large symphonic monuments of the Eleventh ("The Year 1905") and Twelfth ("To the Memory of Lenin") proved to us that Shostakovich was — genius or not — only a Party composer. His own "rehabilitation" seems to have been achieved by the late 1960s, but not before he had undergone censure by the Party one more time, for the Thirteenth Symphony and its clear statement through Yevtushenko's poem "Babi Yar" against anti-Semitism. This, however, seems only a short coda to the censures of 1936 and 1948.

In the memoirs, Shostakovich is tight-lipped about his relations with the Party and any post-Stalinist musical ideology, but his own philosophy of music emerges as one that adopts Socialist Realism as an authentic platform for the creation of music. The Party took a stance he could actually support from a personal conviction: he had believed in music for people all along, and this belief had been the reason for his actions. He got into trouble only because he believed that the abuse, despair, fear, and injustice that characterize the human condition must be sonically objectified as well as its beauty, hope, and joy. In this, Shostakovich was entirely consistent: his early and late music was all of a piece, both critical of and passionate about his society.

It is popular among Western musicologists to take swipes at the principles of Socialist Realism on musical or philosophical grounds; the aspect of unfreedom is just too tempting to ignore, that is, until one realizes that composers around the world jettison their freedom of expression for different motives. The Soviets have forcibly legislated musical simplicity, directness, and comprehensibility in order to arrive at a universal expressivity for mass culture; in a "free" society such as the United States, the same results occur through capitalism. The fault of the former is that the Party decides how intelligent the proletariat are, what their aesthetic needs are, and demands that the composer write music that conforms to those needs. The fault of the latter is that the capitalist sells as a commodity the music that will return the largest profit, of which disco is presently the most current and most critical expression. In the first case, the listener's cognitive abilities and aesthetic consciousness are underestimated in the interests of uniformity; in the second, they are ignored in the interests of greed.

But why in his maturity could Shostakovich not at least understand the winds of change in new Soviet music and lend support to the young composers who wished to break free of the harmonic idiom of common-practice tonal thinking? I think the answer lies in Shostakovich's own tonal consciousness, which, like a fingerprint, is never the same from one person to the next. There are few humans who at fifty learn and effectively use an entirely different spoken language from their native one: the patterns of linguistic consciousness do not yield easily to a half-century of mental habit. This is also true of the acquisition of atonality. Excluding Schoenberg and perhaps Stravinsky (whose works in the atonal idiom did not convert him to twelve-tone music),

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dodecaphonic music remains even today a challenge to that young composer who meets it with enthusiasm and feelings of sonic liberation — if he or she meets it at all. (The reasons for this are embedded largely in the pedagogical form that atonality takes, and cannot be adequately discussed here.) To Shostakovich, atonality meant chaos, just as his own (once) radical tonal consciousness had meant chaos to Stalin. What was at stake was not the mere mastery of a craft to be acquired simply because it was there to be learned, but a conflict with expression *as* content, the substantive form that appears as the sonically objectified consciousness of the socially oriented composer. It is clear that, while the Party envisoned the music of Socialist Realism for mass culture as universally valid, Shostakovich thought of individuals within that culture, where "there were very few heroes or villains. Most people are average, neither black nor white. They're gray.... And it's in that vague gray middle ground that the fundamental conflicts of our age take place.... To the extent of my ability, I tried to write about these people, about their completely average, commonplace dreams and hopes, and about their suspicious tendency toward murder" (94). His commitment to "these people" would not permit him to forge their sonic consciousness into an atonal expressivity merely for the sake of the exercise. For Shostakovich, that was not the purpose of music, and in this regard his historical consciousness is as valid as many an American composer's (Barber, Bernstein, Foss, Thomson, Hanson, Harris, and Blitzstein) whose musical language is built upon the tonal models of Verdi, Mahler, and Debussy rather than Schoenberg, Berg and Webern.

At the close of his memoirs, Shostakovich describes his life as unhappy, tainted with fear, and often physically and psychologically painful, and this must be believed. In addition to its revealing portrait of a frequently troubled personality, *Testimony* affords many more insights into the Soviet Union's most complex cultural era than can here be mentioned. Glazunov's supreme musicianship (not evidenced in his music), Prokofiev's inability to orchestrate his own works, the heritage of Mussorgsky as a *yurodivy* composer, the false folk culture that the republics were forced to create in order to glorify Stalin, the profound influence of 19th-century Russian literature on the contemporary artist, the opportunism of Khrennikov — some of these will take readers by surprise. What is not surprising is the end of the book. After describing "many unpleasant and even tragic events, as well as several sinister and repulsive figures" (276), Shostakovich questions why he allowed himself, via Volkov, to go through the painful process of memory. "I thought perhaps my experience in this regard could also be of some use to people younger than I. Perhaps they wouldn't have the horrible disillusionment that I had to face, and would go through life better prepared, more hardened, than I was. And perhaps their lives would be free of the bitterness that has colored my life gray" (276).

The power of music both to express this grayness and to transcend it as well mark a weary but yet unbroken spirit. Honored by the governments of nations around the world, a fact that Shostakovich seemed to find amusing, at the end of this life he was teaching himself to write music with his left hand because he feared his nearly paralytic right one would soon relinquish all physical responsibility for holding his pen.

Richard Norton

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Eugene Kamenka and Martin Krygier, eds. *Bureaucracy — The Career of a Concept*. London: Edward Arnold, 1979. 155 pages.

Bureaucracy — The Career of a Concept is for the most part Krygier's doctoral thesis in the history of ideas, "Marxism and Bureaucracy." Krygier's chapters, the core of the book, proceed as follows. First, bureaucracy is placed in its etymological and organizational contexts. The concept is then pursued through Saint-Simon and Marx, Weber and Lenin, and Trotsky and the theorists of the new class. Saint-Simon is introduced as the first of the technocrats, whose approach to politics will haunt Bolshevism: politics reduces to organization, literally, to *technique*. Krygier's view of Marx is inconclusive. Marxism has never really had a theory of the state; its fundamentalist attitude insured that all conflicts were to be read back to production relations. The attempts of *Kapitallogic* to derive the state from capital analysis have yet to be substantiated, while some orthodox Marxists attempt to wring a theory of state from Marx's *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*. Work under way at Sydney and Konstanz is yet to bear fruit. But in comparison to orthodoxy it seeks the reconstruction of Marxism *and Hegel*, remaining faithful to the original connotations of the method of *Ableitung*. Other orthodoxies, in comparison, have tried to squeeze a theory of the state from Marx's analysis of Bonapartism. Yet, as Krygier notes, Poulantzas and others have failed to show that the *exceptional* state can in fact serve as the model for the *normal* state. To confuse the exception with the norm is simply a confession of the poverty of the orthodox understanding of the state as tool of the ruling class. The example of Bonapartism derives rather than proves the instrumentalism of the Bolsheviks. Poulantzas made the methodological mistake of choosing to center his argument on an insubstantial reference in a letter of Engels.[1]

With Krygier, we are witness here to the worst of orthodox Marxism — the inability to think is crystallized in the rush to the classics. Like bureaucracy itself, orthodox Marxism depends on the existence of files and precedents: neither can respond to, let alone anticipate, the future in any terms other than those of the past. Orthodoxy's attempts to revive Marx's cadaver tell us much about its own nature without, however, illuminating the real problems we face in a fast declining world, or how we might respond to them. The fact is that Marx had ambiguous notions of political problems; even his scenarios lack unity or correlation. The abstract technological utopia in the *Grundrisse* was never reconciled with the concrete utopia of associated producers who are free in necessity in the third volume of *Capital*. Perhaps Marx's response to the Paris Commune is the most apt indicator of the possible status for a Marxist theory of politics, displaying as it does the necessarily post-facto nature of theorization. Perhaps it is the case that humanity solves only such problems as it sets itself; perhaps the appropriate political forms will only be thrown up in particular concrete struggles.[2] Whatever the case, Marxism may be better off simply to reject its traditional desire for a bogus certainty and security in a world in which contingency calls the tune. Such an openness about politics must be combined with a decisive rejection of notions that socialism could be the end of politics. In situations of zero politics, the Marxists have often headed the death lists.

1. Engels to Marx, April 4, 1866; Nicos Poulantzas, *Political Power and Social Classes* (London, 1975), pp. 258ff.

2. See, for example, the workers' autonomy position, as put in Harry Cleaver, *Reading Capital Politically* (Texas, 1979), or see Marx's letter to Nieuwenhuis of Feb. 2, 1881.

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If for Marx bureaucracy was the functional offspring of a division of labor built on human impotence, for Weber it was a different ballgame, equally stifling but *necessary*. Domination for Weber is a necessary dimension of social administration; direct democracy is a dream for fools. We should beware of socialism, for men (especially Marxists!) are base. Ideal-typical bureaucracy provides the acme of efficiency; bureaucratic neutrality can facilitate the equally competent service of any class. Actual bureaucracy was cause for little optimism, however; the pursuit of individual integrity and responsibility could alone serve to justify our continued existence. This lost dimension of Weber, the cultural pessimism sterilized out in the processing of his theory by American Sociology, is at last resurfacing. Contemporary Marxism is in different ways in dialogue with this long-hidden Weber. At least since *Socialisme ou Barbarie* there has been an attempt to reformulate the emancipatory project on the basis that not only capital but also bureaucracy is the enemy. In the unfolding of the historical tragedy called Marxism, political actors have all too often done Faustian deals with bureaucracy against capital. As always Mephisto is the only victor. The new interest in bureaucracy — the devil we pretended to know — is symptomatic of the mood of the reconstruction project.

What part has Weber to play here? Can he be said to have the answers? Is Weber's 'solution' any more than the confession that there can be no solution? Krygier's answers to these hypothetical questions seem to be in the affirmative, but the most suggestive parts of his essays fail to follow through. Lenin, we discover, is a Weberian despite himself, a judgment that presumably stands to reinforce the legitimacy of Weber's position. Lenin's choice of the post office as microcosm of the future form of social organization is surely more revealing than is usually thought. Where Weber and Lenin agree, it is precisely due to shared understamdings of politics (as leadership in coercion) and of socialism (as nationalization or state capitalism). For Krygier this agreement is read as an endorsement of Weber rather than as a prompter for critical suspicion. A systematic critique would involve teasing out both the Bolshevik problematic and its Weberian counterpart.[3] How can it be that Weber and Lenin agree on one-man management? On the neutrality of technique and technology? On the limits to direct democracy? How can Lenin's Weberianism be reconciled with the 3 R's of socialist democracy (rotation, recall, relativity) in the scenario of *State and Revolution*? How could Lenin's vacillations be explained? These questions are left unanswered because the discursive style of his history of ideas is narrative and inclined to description. Certainly Krygier weaves a complex tapestry, in the best of Oxford styles. He resists simplification and has a nice feel for the tensions and ambiguities in theories. But at no stage does he attempt a systematic explanation of how they could be possible.

Most fundamental in the relationship between Bolshevism and Weber is the spectre of Kautsky, father of the so-called Weberian Marxism. For Kautsky, Marxist science was simply the recognition of necessity, the value-free prediction of inevitable socialism. This scientism came to be the common property of the automatic Marxisms of the last three Internationals, and provides the context for the next theorist analyzed, Trotksy. This scientism, we might note, was also responsible for determining Weber's understanding of Marxism SPD-style.

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3. On Bolshevism, see generally D. Sayer *et al.*, *Socialist Construction and Marxist Theory* (London, 1978), and Carmen Claudin-Urondo, *Lenin and the Cultural Revolution* (London, 1977). In Weber, I am thinking of for example "Politics as a Vocation" in Gerth and Mills, eds., *From Max Weber*; and "Socialism," now in W.G. Runciman, ed., *Weber: Selections* (London, 1978).

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Like Weber, Trotsky also sees politics and therefore bureaucracy as located in the realm of leadership problems. Unlike Weber, Trotsky regards bureaucracy as a function of *backwardness*: he cannot claim to have a theory of the *modern* state. In common with Lenin, Trotsky avoids the phenomenon of bureaucracy by postulating it as a feature of capitalism. The ambiguities forced onto Trotsky by the theory of Permanent Revolution engender yet more confusion. After 1917, at least Trotsky shared with Stalin a bureaucratic notion of organization, and was always a bureaucrat in some form or other. The shift from a charismatic to a traditional power base in the years after 1917 was a shift in place but not in relation: Trotsky was always *in command*, even when he was out of command. Krygier notes that Trotsky and Weber agree on the necessary distinction between politicians and bureaucrats; but again there is more involved here than is taken up. We might remember, for example, that Trotsky's Party-theory of truth in conjunction with a Weberian bureaucratic principle *necessitates* his inconsistent behavior after 1917. Trotsky argues for his position until the party makes a formal decision; he then sets about implementing the new policy with a vengeance regardless of whether it was in fact the policy he fought for or not. Trotsky is prevented from confronting bureaucracy because he identifies with the power that directs it, even when that power is out to do him in. As in Lenin, the systematic method can be revealed in Trotsky's apparent madness. We can suspect that technical rationality is the thread that binds Weber, Kautsky and Bolshevism. In this problem complex, Trotsky emerges as a point of fascination, not because he was a fool, but because he was *not*.

Moving into more recent fields, Krygier makes the interesting observation that Rizzi and Shachtman theorized the new class globally, whereas Eastern European analyses from Djilas to Rakovsky retain their specificity and thus their cogency. Too well disciplined a discourse cannot take up but only trace central contemporary questions such as the nature of the USSR or the participation of the state in the capitalist accumulation process. This silence is a pity, for Weber is indeed a concrete participant in the work of people like Szelenyi on Eastern Europe or like Offe on the capitalist state. The interests of many readers are therefore largely precluded, for the critical heritage from Lukacs to Habermas and Castoriadis (again raising the problematical status of Weber today) is not enjoined.

Many of these criticisms of *Bureaucracy — The Career of a Concept* reduce to methodological predilections. Method comes to the fore in the chapter by Kamenka and Tay, "Freedom, Law and the Bureaucratic State." Here the problem of analytical adequacy is directly confronted. The authors argue that *class* is a crippling concept, and that *politics*, not bureaucracy, is the root of the modern malaise. (Trotsky would agree with the latter, but this would make for an uncomfortable consensus.) So what are the categories with which we can explain politics — and does not class belong somewhere among them? Can *totalitarianism*, the concept put forward by the authors, explain the USSR without the dysfunctions of class analysis? Or does not the concept "totalitarianism" limit real understanding, perhaps even more than the concept "class"? Many of those working within the critical tradition would at least want to argue that understood *relationally*, class still has meaning. No one who thinks could succumb to the nonsense about classes as things, as solid blocs qua Hegelian actors; no one who participates in everyday life could propose class in terms of the IWW caricatures in which top hat personifies the bourgeois and felt cap the proletarian. (Many Trotskyists, one might conclude, neither think much about nor participate much in everyday life.) The authors come to tip their own hats to the radical notion of class as relation in their

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recognition of the struggle for auonomy, the struggle for the abolition of class as a relation of domination.

Whatever the case, "totalitarianism" has the same effect as "new class" (i.e., old class): it serves as a catch-all category that has the effect of minimizing further analysis and obscuring historical specificities. If all cats are gray it matters little whether we call them "new class society" or "totalitarianism." To come to the methodological point, there seem to be problems here for Weberians, or at least for some kinds of Weberians. "Ideology kills more people than bureaucracy," we are told on page 129. What are we to make of the continual and necessary complicity of bureaucracy in contemporary holocausts? People after all might kill each other for ideological reasons with bureaucratic means. To exaggerate the role of ideas in such a discussion can take us dangerously close to those French farces in which ideas (and thereby intellectuals) stalk the Earth as the Incarnation of Evil. Kamenka and Tay indicate their awareness of this tenuous argument in their allusions to the permanently one-sided nature of social theory. This has indeed been the case, but need it always be? Must social theory always be victim to the momentary, the partial, the one-sided? Can it assist politics at all if it is so consistently one-sided? This is obviously an undeclared epistemological debate. But there can be theoretical attitudes other than the elevation of common sense to concept.[4] Common sense has its own logic — not the logic of innocence but that of complicity in acceptance. Maybe all of us are guilty: but the false dichotomization of ethics of ends and responsibility is then a part of this guilt.

As far as I know, the Weberians have at no stage clarified systematically the relationship between theory and history. From them we do not know what can be known and what cannot. But the rejection of epistemology is itself an epistemological position, typically that which is associated with pragmatism. It is not entirely clear whether the ideal type is primarily a device for presentation or for research, nor is it clear whether it is the beginning or the end of research. It is not explained how the ideal type can *facilitate* research rather than merely reproduce itself by filtering out what doesn't fit and incorporating that which does. If the ideal type can accommodate historical novelties it is no longer clear how it should be ideal or typical.[5] Methodological agnosticism is of no help here. Why should the project of the explanation of dictatorships over needs be turned into the general ideal-type "totalitarianism," the supreme virtue of which consists in being supra-historical? How total was or is totalitarianism? Had Stalinism the available technical means to facilitate it? What precisely does the concept totalitarianism consist of? If it reduces to systematic *terror*, is it not better simply to say this? If technological surveillance is essential to totalitarianism, how can we distinguish Western Germany today from Stalinism? If it is auto-lobotomization which sets totalitarianism apart, how can East and West be distinguished?

More directly, it must be emphasized that these criticisms do not deal with competence but with adequacy. As *history*, history of ideas vacillates between narrative and uneven conceptual analysis. The relative absence of critical self-reflection vis-à-vis concepts allows ambiguities: some idiocies, in this case Marxist ones, are dismissed only to let others in the back door. As *ideas*, history of ideas gives inadequate grounding to the actual problems that it claims to interrogate. Most of us are bureaucrats or

4. See generally Russell Jacoby, *Social Amnesia* (Boston, 1975).

5. Some relevant and underanalyzed texts in Weber include *The Methodology of the Social Sciences* (New York, 1949), Roscher and Knies, *The Logical Problem of Historical Economics* (New York, 1975), and *Critique of Stammler* (New York, 1977). Whether Weber's *practices* accord with his self-understanding is another problem, as is the relation between his economic history and his sociology.

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bureaucrats in the making. Those of us fortunate enough to have jobs must take on the delicate tightrope act which we can call the educational paradox: how can we work in a sufficiently radical way to convey emancipatory form as well as critical content? Are we doomed to be radical bureaucrats, less little Lenins than little Trotskys? Or is it our fate to simply stand by the window, emitting stoical strength? The anarchists have had it easy in suggesting that we replace commodified schooling with the self-conscious society. How can we, or they, respond to a situation that calls on us to defend the educational system — which we wanted to transform — against the Thatchers of this world? In the everyday and in the systematic sense, the need for understanding bureaucracy confronts us with steel jaws. This book belongs to the period that precedes the present crisis.

Peter Beilharz

E.P. Thompson. *The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays.* New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1979. 404 plus v pages.

Thompson's new book is a collection of four essays, three of which appeared earlier (1973, 1965, and 1960). Although the latter three are interesting, I will comment only on "The Poverty of Theory or an Orrery of Errors" (1978), Thompson's long critique of Althusser.

One response to Althusser has been eclecticism: although his French Communist Party politics are not worth anything, his philosophical ideas can be detached from his politics and fit into something one could call "up-to-date Marxism," or perhaps better, Super Marxism. This tolerance of Althusser is certainly a sign of the times because in the 1960s no one would have dared to put forward Roger Garaudy as a philosopher whose great ideas could be detached from his politics. Also, in a 1969 issue of *Radical America* devoted to Althusser, only one contributor tried to salvage the "rigorous" theory from the PCF politics. Althusser's predictably conservative response to the events of May 1968 discredited the philosopher in many New Left circles. I think Thompson is right, however, to concentrate on Althusser in 1978 because his ideas do indeed refract important assumptions of our present situation. Althusser's ideas, as Thompson analyzes them, cannot be detached and redeemed from his dubious politics; rather, these ideas themselves are a politics of the most dubious sort. According to Thompson, "Althusserianism" is "a manifestation of a general police action within ideology" and an "attempt to reconstruct Stalinism at the level of theory" (p. 131). Moreover, it is not only "an ideological police action *against* any fundamental socialist critique of Stalinism, but a police action which presents itself...as exactly such a critique" (pp. 135-136). Thompson's Althusser is not a philosopher of interesting ideas from which one might pick and choose at one's ease, but a deceptive, dangerous theoretician one must refute. The problem is not just Althusser, and certainly not just the PCF: the problem is our historical moment in which someone like Althusser can exert so much influence. The things that make Althusser a destructive thinker Thompson also sees in other theorists, such as other structuralists — Popper, Parsons, Smelser, Goldmann, and the Frankfurt School. Thompson is not just criticizing Althusser, but a way of thinking that is distinctively contemporary.

With the rise of Eurocommunism, the critique and repudiation of Stalinism are at the center of discussion. Since everyone (except a few unfortunate souls who do not even

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know when to be opportunistic) is against Stalinism, what matters is *how* Stalinism is criticized. Althusser's own "left" critique of the "Stalinian deviation" is astonishingly superficial. It is likely that all of Althusser's important concepts — overdetermination, anti-humanism, anti-empiricism, anti-historicism, relative autonomy of the superstructure, class struggle as motor of history — were designed specifically to provide rationalizing explanations of Stalinism. According to Althusser, the Soviet Union did not become the "negation of the negation," but instead a "socialist" country somewhere between communism and capitalism. Althusser's war against Hegel, it seems, originates here, where dialectical concepts would provide useful criticisms of the Soviet Union's "socialism." The notion of overcoming alienation is perhaps the most hateful Hegelian idea that Althusser is at pains to discredit by means of his structuralist concepts. For Althusser, Soviet "socialism" has to wage the class struggle against capitalism even within its own borders. When the Bolsheviks took power, the bourgeois superstructure remained relatively autonomous, so that the socialist task was doubly difficult. The class struggle had to be waged against external and internal enemies because communism was still in the far distance. Stalin no doubt chose the wrong victims, too many of them, and so on, but talk about personality cult, socialist illegality, humanism, and ethics is so much bourgeois ideology. Stalin misread the class struggle, but he was trying to read the correct text.[1]

Thompson insists that we are not living in a post-Stalin era, despite all the rhetoric to the contrary (p. 136). A theoretical Stalinism still exists because it was never fully recognized, criticized, and superseded. "Stalinism . . . considered as theory, was not one 'error,' nor even two 'errors,' which may be identified, 'corrected,' and Theory thus reformed. Stalinism was not absent-minded about crimes: it *bred* crimes. In the same moment that Stalinism emitted 'humanist' rhetoric, it occluded the human faculties as part of its necessary mode of respiration. Its very breath stank (and still stinks) of inhumanity, because it has found a way of regarding people as the bearers of structures (*kulaks*) and history as a process without a subject. It is not an admirable theory, flawed by errors; it is a heresy against reason, which proposes that all knowledge can be summated in a single Theory, of which it is the sole arbiter and guardian. It is not an imperfect 'science,' but an ideology suborning the good name of science in order to deny all independent rights and authenticity to the moral and imaginative faculties. It is not only a compendium of errors, it is a cornucopia out of which new errors ceaselessly flow. . . . Stalinism is a distinct, ideological mode of thought, a systematic theoretical organization of 'error' for the reproduction of more 'error' " (p. 140).

Against Althusser's structuralism, Thompson puts historical materialism, something that is part of the Marxist tradition but is not a Marx*ism* (p. 168). Social being does not determine social consciousness via the base or the superstructure or the mode of production or the "structure in dominance." The one-way determinant model of structuralism is replaced with a two-way model of dialogue and interaction between being and consciousness, mediated by the important factor of experience. People make history and are made by it. They struggle for social changes within a field defined by exploitation and domination. There is, indeed, human agency, but not, of course, pure voluntarism (pp. 8-9, 18, 164, and *passim*). Although the "economic movement" of society "finally asserts itself as necessary," this determinism has "a greater complexity and reciprocity of relations than Marx proposed" (pp. 158-159). Determinism does not signify a cause-effect relationship, but rather means "setting limits," "exerting

1. See *Essays in Self-Criticism*, trans. Grahame Lock (London and Atlantic Highlands, 1976), and *For Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster (New York, 1969), esp. p. 116.

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pressures," and defining the "logic of process" (p. 159).

I think we are beginning to see how extremely subversive radical historiography really is. Frances Fitzgerald's study of American history textbooks gives some idea of how "social amnesia" is institutionally created. The rewriting and distorting of important social events, like the civil rights movement, are mass-produced by corporate television studios and presented as "fiction." There is indeed something indispensable about accurate historical remembrance. Without a past, we cannot create a future. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* rediscovered a liberating mode of historiography, history from below, from the perspective of the exploited and dominated, many of whom also fought back. An unequivocal classic in this tradition of historiography is Peter Kropotkin's *The Great French Revolution, 1789-1793,* a book Thompson never mentions. It is doubtful whether the Marxist tradition has been the most faithful practitioner of historical materialism as it manifests itself in historiography. Historical research into the Russian Revolution and Spanish social revolution and civil war has uncovered libertarian communist initiatives from below that had long been suppressed by Marxist-Leninist and liberal historians alike. Only a concrete, empirical research after facts could have discovered this critique-in-practice of both authoritarian socialism and capitalism. One revealing thing about Althusser's work is the paucity of historical detail. Even when he discusses the Russian Revolution and the Soviet Union, there is never a detailed analysis of historical events. He assumes everything is "self-evident," and on the level of common sense. The most damaging and enduring critique of Stalinism is simply (!) a historical, concrete analysis of what actually happened. To try to resolve Stalinism theoretically, with only slight reference to history, as Althusser does, is to guarantee the futility of the effort. The great scandal of Stalinism was and is its ability to so mystify real human experience that virtually any outrage can be justified or explained away. The only sure check against this kind of terroristic idealism is concrete historical analysis from the perspective of the oppressed who are fighting against oppression. What happened to the Russian factory committees in 1917-20; at Kronstadt in 1922; in the Ukraine with Makhno's guerrillas; at Barcelona in May 1937? To answer these questions accurately is to break with Stalinism and make another kind of politics possible.

Thompson's concrete, historical analysis demolishes the pretensions of Althusser's "theoretical anti-humanism." Socialist humanism was an anti-Stalinist movement of the 1950s and 1960s that tried to launch a libertarian alternative. Althusser's pronouncements against humanism in the early 1960s were specifically designed to combat these heresies "scientifically," without appearing to be Stalinist. The moralistic platitudes of Soviet apologists like John Lewis — one of Althusser's polemical opponents — were simply the other side of the same authoritarian coin. Lewis and Althusser both refuse to examine the real Soviet Union, its past or its present. How convenient, then, that Althusser also has a pretentious critique of "historicism" as just a useless piece of bourgeois ideology infected with vulgar "empiricism." Althusser closes off all the exits through which he might pass out of his Stalinism. He remains in Theory, from where he can spin out his structuralese, fully confident that any criticisms of his own ideas are bourgeois ideology or romantic "leftism" (as if the latter were self-evidently without merit).

Althusser's attempt to create a Marxist science at the level of Theory has roots in the scientism of the Marxist tradition and the idealism of Western philosophy. Thompson shows how Marx himself sometimes tried to articulate a "science" of economic categories that could fully explain social formations. Thompson distinguishes between the movement and logic of capital — that is, commodities, property relations, and so on —

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and the ensemble of social relations called capitalism. To explain capital is not to explain capitalism. At times, Marx seemed to forget this. The *Grundrisse* face of Marx, as Thompson calls it (p. 163), is not worthy of Marx's philosophical advances of the 1840s or the later insights of historical materialism. Moreover, Marx and Engels tended to fudge on the issue of ethics, which they often viewed as an epiphenomenon; on morality, "Morris was immensely more perceptive than Engels or Marx" (p. 172). The pretensions of Marxist science are of a piece with the idealism of Western philosophy. Thompson could find useful material for his critique of idealism in some of Dewey's work. In Dewey's *Experience and Nature,* he argued that the depreciation of experience in idealistic philosophy was a result of a hostility to what was temporal, changing, and uncertain. The fantasy of idealism is the fantasy of the thinker, separated from labor, who hypostasizes contemplation as pure Being, which exists above the sordid doings of the experiential world, which is merely "appearance" to the Reality of the ideas. By continually refining one's philosophical assumptions, the idealist tries to get closer to the static truth, which exists hidden beneath the deceptive appearances. Rather than engage the world of experience in a dialogue of inquiry and testing, the idealist self-generates ideas ever more immune to empirical control. The structuralist, like the idealist, searches for that one key to unlock the treasures of absolute certainty and eternal truthfulness. These are fantasies that have frequently appealed to thinkers. In this, Althusser is hardly new, nor is structuralism by any means unique.

In a revealing statement in *For Marx*, Althusser discloses his elitism in no uncertain terms and decodes inadvertently what he means by "class struggle is the motor of history." He says that only intellectuals could produce Marxist socialism, which presupposes "the massive theoretical labor of the establishment and development of a science and a philosophy without precedent." Theorists are workers, too, producing "knowledges" in the class struggle. The ordinary people who work — or who are out of work, or who don't want to work — could not have created this unprecedented science. The spontaneous products of the workers' consciousness have been such things as "utopian socialism, trade-unionism, anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism." Perhaps Althusser is partly correct here. Perhaps only intellectuals, with idealist, structuralist, and scientific delusions, could have ruined the socialist movement as thoroughly as Stalinism did. Althusser's elitism helps us understand his key category. Class struggle is the motor of history. What is the class struggle? Masses struggling against the bourgeoisie...through their class organizations, the unions and the Party. Who runs these organizations? You guessed it, those theoretical toilers, whose fingers are stained with ink and darkened from the typewriter ribbon — it is they who uncover the "structures" and the modes of production and the determinant vectors; it is they who make history. Now it is clear. Althusser makes history. This is theoretical anti-humanism.

Thompson has provided a set of reliable theoretical assumptions within which one can argue the finer points. He has also identified Althusserianism as a theoretical Stalinism very much a feature of our present historical situation. What is problematic in Thompson's essay can usually be corrected by applying his own methods to areas he neglects. Thompson, unfortunately, is reluctant to get too far from the Marxist tradition. Nevertheless, he has done the libertarian left a useful service by meticulously and, one hopes, definitively, demolishing Althusser's theoretical Stalinism. The social forces that have made Althusser an important figure, however, are not so easily disposed of. Thompson has an enlightening suggestion concerning the rise of structuralism: the Cold War. Although there have been many and important emancipatory social initiatives in the last 30 years, each one has been held in check, turned backward, or

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drowned in blood. The list of promising disappointments is a catalogue of revolutionary hopes that did not fully materialize, due to the overwhelming repressive power of the United States, the U.S.S.R., and other centralized forces of armed brutality in the world. He does indeed feel that despite extraordinarily heroic efforts, it is faceless, anonymous, unreachable structures, and not people, that determine our social world. Especially with China falling into line along with the other Great Powers, a political Ice Age seems to have set in. Thompson is surely right in saying structuralism is "the illusion of this epoch" (p. 71) because it mirrors social reality so well. History is a process without a subject, according to Althusser. This is wrong, but it often feels that way. Although one must analyze the social immobility that makes even moderate reforms extremely difficult to carry through, one sacrifices all hope of changing society, of ever overcoming alienation, by submitting to structuralism.

Michael Scrivener

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SHORT JOURNAL REVIEWS:

BLACK ROSE (Summer 1979)

P.O. Box 1075, Boston, MA 02103. $6 for 4 issues. LIBERTARIA* *"Christine."* A poem. FRANK BRODHEAD, *"Notes on the Draft."* Looks at the lack of attention to the plan for a national youth program from forces opposing return of the draft. The draft is viewed within the context of a perceived breakdown of institutions that have traditionally served to contain the volatile energies of young people in their adolescence. Brodhead examines the draft's return as part of the growth of the New Right and relates this campaign to the larger struggles against abortion and gay rights. LESTOR J. MAZOR, *"Some Recent Discoveries Concerning the Modern State."* Mazor sketches the main outlines of the modern state based upon inferences drawn from scattered and fragmentary writings of a theoretical nature that survived the "waves of actions against information retention" at the end of the Modern Age. The main focus is on territorial size, demographic distribution, interaction of persons, control of material production, and legitimacy. Maintains that "the struggle for the lifting of the veil of ignorance which sustained these myths (i.e., of the state), for the recognition that the power is dispersed, that it resides in all relationships, and that it could be assembled horizontally rather than vertically, stands between the political vitality of our own epoch and the iron cage which was once the modern state." STEPHEN AMBERG, ANN KOTELL, PAULA RAYMAN, *"An Interview with Richard Cloward and Frances Fox-Piven."* Discusses relevant tactics, strategies and goals of such groups as the Poor People's Movement, the women's movement, labor and the National Welfare Rights Organization. ROBERT NEWMAN, *"Le Guin's 'The Dispossessed' and Anarchism."* Examines twin themes of this novel: that a decentralized, anarchistic society would be superior to a centralized, hierarchic one, and that anarchism cannot afford to ignore internal criticism that even an anarchist polity might succumb to the temptations of power. PFM

CANADIAN JOURNAL OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL THEORY, 1:1 (Winter 1977)

Arthur Kroker, Dept. of Political Science, University of Winnipeg, 515 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3B 2E9. $10 per year (3 issues). EDITOR, *"Preface."* Thematizes the new journal's project as a "gathering point for the generation of a new tradition of critical and creative political and social theory in Canada," focused on the analysis of the Canadian public situation and aiming at the "development of a distinctively Canadian intellectual sensibility." BEN AGGER, *"Dialectical Sensibility I: Critical Theory, Scientism and Empiricism."* In an argument for repoliticizing Critical Theory, Horkheimer and Adorno are accused of leading Critical Theory into a de-politicized blind alley, a result of their wilful retreat into contemplation combined with their rejection of philosophical anthropology. MICHAEL A. WEINSTEIN, *"Political Philosophy and the Public Situation."* Political philosophy and the public situation that it traditionally seeks to inform and affect have become, Weinstein says, hermetically sealed from one another, with the former abandoning its concern for public conduct and institutions in favor of philosophy's "new universal" of intersubjectivity and the protected realm of interpersonality, while public discourse becomes progressively monopolized by instrumentalism. The way out is through embracing a Merleau-Ponty-esque "tragic politics" and qualified engagement in "radical provincialist" movements that offer the prospect of pluralizing the technocratic monolith. ARTHUR KROKER, *"On Moral Economy."* Defines the limits of a "formative intellectual sensibility adequate to express the contemporary critical generation's vital concerns. Kroker's program combines a reflexive and self-critical empiricism that has grasped the corporativist deformation of the dominant social theoretical discourse with a conception of the social universe as "conglomerate of all conglomerates," used as a touchstone for inquiry into the consciousness-forming and tension-producing dimensions of the contemporary social world." IRVING LAYTON, *"Harold Laski: The Paradoxes of a Liberal Marxist."* Short-form reprint of a 1946 vulgar Marxist demolition of Laski's claim to be considered Marxist. It's more interesting as a comment on the political biography of Layton himself (an established Canadian poet) than it is as an attack on a dead horse of Fabianism. PHILLIP HANSEN, *"T.H. Green and the Moralization of the Market."* Solid demonstration that the consistency and limitations of this English Liberal organicist lie in his possessive individualist assumptions. Review of Leiss, *The Limits to Satisfaction* by Alkiskonvos challenges Leiss' rejection of the true-false needs distinction and argues for the restoration of critical-emancipatory ontology. AW

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*This section was compiled by John Fekete, Department of English Literature, Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario, Canada K9J 7B8. The following have contributed reviews: Irene Harvey, Larry Irons, Robert John, Pamela McCallum, Peter Murphy, Gini Nelson, Harland Prechel, Greg Renault, Robert Rucker, Rachel Scharff, Jimmy Lee Shaw, Andrew Wernick, Daniel Wildcat.

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CANADIAN JOURNAL OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THEORY, 1:2
(Spring-Summer 1977)

ROD PREECE, *"The Myth of the Red Tory."* An assault on Gad Horowitz's celebrated thesis about the presence in Canadian politics of a hybrid "tory democracy" or "tory radicalism." Preece concludes that the Progressive Conservatives have never been other than liberal pro-business in orientation, and Whig in their political philosophy and that therefore the "Red Tory" is a useless category. DEENA WEINSTEIN, *"Bureaucratic Opposition: The Challenge to Authoritarian Abuses at the Work Place."* Focuses on the emancipatory potential of "resistance to formal organizational authority by individuals or informal groups." The whole domain of politics needs to be rescued from bourgeois social science's oversightful subsumption of the phenomenon in its abstract functionalist discourse about institutional adaptations, and critical theory's parallel assumption of tensionless bureaucratic coordination. Against the latter Weinstein stresses the degree to which the bureaucratized workplace necessarily and normally generates ongoing politics about control and functional direction that potentially provides a basis for the emergence of non-economic struggles. BEN AGGER, *"Dialectical Sensibility II: Towards a New Intellectuality."* Uses Marcuse and Freire to argue for a new, democratized understanding of the theory-practice nexus understood as cognitive self-management and for the development of a politicized intellectuality that advises the praxis of the oppressed, and is itself founded in an integrative human sensibility that practices the overcoming of work-play, mental-manual, theory-politics dualities that it preaches. PATRICIA HUGHES, *"Mary Wollstonecraft: Stoic Liberal-Democrat."* Takes an overdue look at the place of Wollstonecraft's path-breaking examination of sexual inequality in her overall ideological perspective — which is seen as a conventional (for late 18th-century England) liberal mixture of support for private property and philanthropic concern for the poor. Wollstonecraft's critique of class (which opposed the remnant aristocracy and its basis in inheritance) was evidently as limited as her feminism (which argued for a recognition of the worth of traditional female social and familial roles rather than for an end to the sexual division of labor altogether). MAURICE EISENSTEIN, *"Democratic Politics and Ideology: R.G. Collingwood's Analysis of Metaphysics in Political Philosophy and Moral Civilization."* Elaborates Collingwood's project of historicizing metaphysics and applies the counter-categories of progressive, reactionary and irrational anti-metaphysics to a critique of contemporary Western political discourse. The attack on metaphysics — i.e., the negation of reflection on logically efficacious first principles either in the name of the inviolability of a particular reigning set or in the name of frank irrationalism — is depicted as index and partial cause of contemporary un-democracy. WILLIAM LEISS, *"An Ontology of Stoned Concepts."* A response to the review of his work in the previous issue. Leiss argues that "radical social theory [should] give the moribund notion of 'commodity fetishism' a decent burial;" and that critical reflection on consumer culture, equally capable of marking the distortions of the need-satisfaction process in a "high intensity market setting" and drawing out the liberating potential of expanded consumer choice, can be adequately based in an empirical examination of the actual process without recourse to an a priori ontology of human needs. MARK WARREN, *"Cheap Thrills in the Late Seventies."* Favorably reviews Jacoby's *Social Amnesia*, but takes Jacoby to task for not distinguishing between "good and bad immediacy" and for thus missing the modern cult of subjectivity's "moments of truth." AW

CANADIAN JOURNAL OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL THEORY, 1:3
(Fall 1977)

DALLAS W. SMYTHE, *"Communications: Blind Spot of Western Marxism."* Provocative attempt to define communications as a Marxist object of study. Smythe attacks as idealist the notion that communication systems exist to produce ideology: to look at the subject from the "historical materialist" perspective means to look at its economic functioning, and thus at its commodity form. Working from the model of an industry that produces "audiences" for sale to advertisers, Smythe re-examines some conventional assumptions about "free time" and concludes that no working time in monopoly capitalism is free since it is colonized in the very process of producing the audience commodity: a commodity that is, moreover, produced partly with the unpaid labor-power of its various audiences. The model is fertile, but in arguing for it Smythe becomes dogmatic in his dismissal of all purely semiotic inquiry as idealist. He also plays down the significance of the entertainment function as an independent vehicle for the commodification and orchestration of leisure activity. F. MECHNER BARNARD, *"Infinity and Finality: Hannah Arendt on Politics and Truth."* A sympathetic restatement of Arendt's critique of the collapse of politics as a distinct realm of human activity in modern industrial society. For Barnard, the loftiness of Arendt's vision "of men acting together as a plurality, combining equality and

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distinction, begetting memorable deeds [and] free from domination of any kind," is, however, qualified by its ambiguities, strains of amoralism, and oversimplification of the problem of securing spontaneous consensus. It is also vitiated by a refusal to ground the political enterprise in the everyday conflicts of the world, which Barnard hits at but does not fully explore. ALKIS KONTOS, *"The Intellectual Life."* Traces the vocation of intellectuality from Socrates to Hegel and Marx as the background against which to understand its meaning and difficulties in the current context. Kontos tries to demarcate a space between the two contrasting modern styles of contemplative purism and radical activism, both of which are distinguished from the mere "merchants of ideas" who have long ago taken over the Academy and destroyed it as the home of any intellectual life. "The essence of the intellectual life" for Kontos "is a reconstruction, recreation of the meaning of a concrete particular, an individual life, affirmed and asserted in the world as such, against the actual, historical condition of the world" and its broader social function is fulfilled in alliance with "whatever force can penetrate and overthrow" the surrounding structure of domination. HAROLD CHORNEY, WALLACE CLEMENT, LEO PANITCH and PAUL PHILLIPS, *"The State and Political Economy."* A transcribed discussion between four of English Canada's leading new generation of political economists on the modern Marxist theory of the state and its application to the analysis of Canada. They focus on the way in which the fragmentary and regionalized condition of the Canadian state reflects the fractionalization of the bourgeoisie. Ground is sketched rather than explored. The Miliband-Poulantzas debate, for example, on the object of a Marxist theory (empirical complex of public institutions vs. abstractly posited functions) is cited, but not what is at issue, methodologically and politically. Ditto with respect to the relationship between class in and for itself — and thus the meaning to be attached to the notion of the working-class movements. CHARLES TAYLOR, *"On Social Justice."* A masterful review of Robert Wolff's *Understanding Rawls* which further develops Wolff's thematization of the substantive issue in liberal political theory that Rawls is taken to be interested in: reconciliation of utilitarian pleasure principle with Kantian moral rationalism, via an attempt to show that procedural justice has the character of a synthetic a priori of practical reason. Taylor argues that the project is impossible, even if of strategic ideological significance for the theorists of liberalism, and that Rawls' game theoretic *tour de force* is really a sleight of hand that validates nothing (as Rawls admits) and has the latent function of legitimating the value of procedural justice in terms of the current mathematically inflected discourse of analytic philosophy. GEORGE WOODCOCK, *"In Praise of Civility."* Sympathizes with the spirit of Sennett's *The Fall of Public Man,* but argues, against Sennett's insistence on the centrality of the city as a site for the revival of a genuinely political civic culture, in favor of "urban and national decentralization." RAY MORROW, *"Amnesia Critique: A 'Marxist' Appropriation of the Frankfurt School."* A witty assessment of Slater's *Origin and Significance of the Frankfurt School,* which defends the Frankfurt thinkers from the charges of "tendential idealism." Against Slater's judgment that Horkheimer and Adorno abandoned concrete reference to critical-revolutionary praxis, Morrow argues that the profound changes in the social structure they detected to be taking place made "any attempt to develop a theory of 'practical' politics. . . theoretically immature." Morrow's argument is one-sided in its denial of fundamental differences between Marcuse and those who returned to Germany and in its unwillingness to re-examine critical theory in light of the (admittedly doomed) German anti-authoritarian 1960s student movement. GAD HOROWITZ, *"The 'Myth' of the Red Tory."* A response to an earlier review that argues there are only semantic differences between Preece and himself. AW

CANADIAN JOURNAL OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THEORY, 2:1
(Winter 1978)

STEPHEN KLINE and WILLIAM LEISS, *"Advertising, Needs, and 'Commodity Fetishism.'"* Drawing on recent work by Scitovsky, Hirsh and Sahlins, Kline and Leiss outline an approach to the analysis of consumer culture that challenges both traditional utility theory and abstract Marxist critique based on the fuzzy notion of 'commodity fetishism.' Marx's insistence that the "mystery" of the commodity lies in its commodity form, rather than in its function as object of use and need, is criticized in the light of the confused relation between needing and its satisfaction through product-purchase that arises with product proliferation and the ubiquitous mediation of marketing. The preliminary results of a study into TV and magazine advertising are discussed, with the focus on the process of developing commodity symbolization. The framework for analyzing advertising symbolism is a convincing start to an exploration of modern commodity-based semiosis, but the focus on the place of imagery within selling rhetoric leaves unexamined the myth-content of advertising and thus its broader ideological function. Some Marxists will

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question the (somewhat gratuitous) political conclusion that "Tensions originating in the consumer culture will therefore be the focus of social conflict and debates over appropriate public policies." The theme section contains four essays on 'Emancipatory Theory.' JOHN O'NEILL, *"Merleau-Ponty's Critique of Marxist Scientism."* A careful outline of Merleau-Ponty's attempt to rescue Marxism from objectivism by basing Marxism's theoretical and practical categories in the *Lebenswelt*. O'Neill zeroes in on Merleau-Ponty's neo-Weberian account of the moral ambivalence of revolutionary praxis, and provides a useful complement to the current discussion of the implications of exploring Marxism's phenomenological grounds, a topic also mapped out in Merleau-Ponty's work. The connections between such a morally and epistemologically grounded emancipatory theory and strategic praxis remain, however, as obscure as ever. CHARLES RACHLIS, *"Marcuse and the Problem of Happiness."* A re-examination and restatement of *Eros and Civilization's* main themes — particularly its neo-Freudian thematization of happiness as the revolutionary telos (elimination of surplus repression and development of non-surplus-repressive reality principle). Builds on Marcusean concepts a discussion of the kind of "consciousness sufficient to crack the shell of domination" and concludes that it embodies "both the awareness of historical amnesia and the beginnings of a transformed sensibility." Criticizes Leiss' rejection of ontology as an elision of the unconscious that "traps him in the historical mediation of needs and satisfactions" and argues against Agger that the political implications of Marcuseanism point to engagement in ideological conflicts and struggles. JAMES SCHMIDT, *"Reification and Recollection: Emancipatory Intentions and the Sociology of Knowledge."* Examines recent attempts at the critical appropriation of Mannheim, and argues that Mannheim's notion of conjunctive knowledge occludes the distinction between alienated and non-alienated community self-reproduction via cultural formation. Tracing the conservative position of Mannheim's present-day disciples to this weakness, Schmidt reasonably concludes that "the absence of a practical intent in Berger and Luckmann's work may be traced to a basic inadequacy in the theory of social reproduction they share with Mannheim." HERBERT E. REID, *"Existential Phenomenology and Critical Political Theory."* With references to Merleau-Ponty, Ricoeur and Kosik, Reid proposes a reflexive examination of the *Lebenswelt* of contemporary industrial society which recognizes and challenges the instrumental rationality he discovers to be at the ideological horizon of that world. Establishes the topical outlines of a multi-dimensional social-phenomenological critique that moves from an examination of the self's immediate cultural environment (in America) to the "international dimensions of 'world openness' " and explores both the metaphysical bases of the prevailing ideological-cultural universe and the prospects for its transformation. ALVIN FINKEL, *"Trade Unions, The Working Class and the State"* and HENRY VELTMEYER, *"Political Economy: A Question of Theory."* Responses to issues raised in the forum on political economy in the previous issue. Finkel argues that North American trade unions cannot be considered pure working-class organizations since in their current legal-institutional form they reflect the impress of state legislation and selective repression in line with exogenous pressure to conform to the mediating, disciplinary needs of capitalism's social reproduction. Veltmeyer objects to the confusion between methodology and theory, complaining that theoretical clarification at a basic level needs to be done before Marxists can claim to be in possession of a lucid theory of the capitalist state. Amen. ROD PREECE restates his argument about the non-existence of Red Toryism in the face of Horowitz's objections. AW

CATALYST, No. 13 (Spring 1979)

Otonabee College, Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario, Canada K9J 7B8. $6 for 4 issues. JOHN SHEPEHERD, *"Music and Social Control: An Essay on the Sociology of Musical Knowledge."* An extensive, heavily document argument against traditional conceptions of popular music. Demonstrates how elitist concerns with social control penetrate into language, tending to deny difference and reduce otherness to the linear schema of Western tonality. PETER ROYLE, *"Man and Nature in Sartre."* Argues that human nature is not fixed for Sartre, but created in particular situations; further, it is not entirely rational, but allows for passion. The fundamental problem in this conception is Sartre's Cartesian dualism and anti-historicism. GREGORY RENAULT, *"From Bureaucracy to L'Imaginaire: Cornelius Castoriadis' Immanent Critique of Marxism."* Surveys Castoriadis' work from *Socialisme ou Barbarie* through the present. CORNELIUS CASTORIADIS, *"What is Important."* Translation of a 1959 article criticizing elitist monopolization of knowledge and the hierarchy of experts which reproduces the larger division between order-takers and order-givers. CORNELIUS CASTORIADIS, *"Hierarchy of Salaries and Incomes."* Behind the inequality of income is the more basic issue of power and control, self-management versus hierarchy. A series of arguments justifying income-

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power hierarchy are subjected to an immanent critique; demystified, such ideology reveals the arbitrary force underlying differences in income. Both Marxist and bourgeois economics are shown to be agents of legitimation, purveyors of capitalism's imaginary significations. Followed by a bibliography of Castoriadis' major works in French and English. GR

CATALYST: A SOCIALIST JOURNAL OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES
1:3 (1978)

Box 1144, Cathedral Station, New York, NY 10025. $10 per 4 issues. SCOTT WIRTH, *"Coming Out Close to Home: Principles for Psychotherapy with Families of Lesbians and Gay Men."* On the reactions of non-gay family members to the process of coming out, and what impels gays to come out to their families. Basic considerations for therapists facing this situation are discussed. REKHA BASU, AMRITA BASU, MARK KESSELMAN, *"Racism, Classism and Welfare: A View from the Bottom."* Discussion of the ways in which race and class distinctions victimize workers and clients, extracted from a welfare department employee's personal experience with racial discrimination on the job. ELI MESSINGER, *"Capitalist Origins of Mental Distress."* Predictable Marxist treatment of the effect of the imperatives of capitalist production on work and personal life. PETER FINDLAY, *"Critical Theory and Social Work Practice."* Fails hopelessly, confusing classical Marxism with Critical Theory, and uncritically assimilating Gortz, Mathiessen and Freire to the mess. Ignorance at the theoretical level leads to equally flawed attempts at practical application. ARTHUR MAGLIN, *"Social Values and Psychotherapy."* A contrast of traditional depoliticized therapy with a politicized version. Since social and political values cannot be eliminated from the therapeutic relationship, it is a matter of consciously recognizing and choosing appropriate attitudes. While this article raises a problem basic to radical social work, it doesn't address the material determinants that make institutions the vehicle of implicit social policies. JIM HANSON, *"Toward a Neo-Marxist Theory of State Welfare."* Survey of Marx and O'Connor. This issue also contains notes on social work and the women's movement, news reports, comments and reviews. GR

CLIO, 8:1 (Fall 1978)

Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne, IN 46805. $6 for 3 issues. JOHN J. BURKE JR., *"Scott's Views on History in* The Fortunes of Nigel*."* Argues that Scott's views on history in his novels entail a reciprocal critique of the present by the past and vice versa. GABRIEL LANYI, *"Further Thoughts on Literary Periods."* Examines the concept of literary period as defined by Wellek, focusing on its temporal coordinates and its systematization of specific literary norms. Lanyi attempts to illustrate the range of variation from arbitrary non-literary periodization to the abandonment of the concept altogether in literary criticism. ROLF GRUNER, *"Historicism: Its Rise and Decline."* In tracing the history of the concept of historicism, Gruner attempts to sharpen its definition beyond the 'contemporary misuses of it,' such as: A 'dynamic point of view' and-or 'relativism.' ALAN S. BRUDNER, *"The Significance of Hegel's Prefatory Lectures on the Philosophy of Law."* A case is made for re-reading Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* in light of Hegel's lectures on the same. Brudner argues that the conservatism in the text is contradicted by the lectures and further that Hegel actually advocated critique of tradition and the given authority of the state. The discrepancy is accounted for by historical expediency regarding the publication of a text during the time of an authoritarian Prussian regime. G.W.F. HEGEL, *"Prefatory Lectures on the Philosophy of Law."* Published here for the first time, these lecture notes of students from Hegel's classes of 1818-19 substantiate Brudner's claim above. Hegel advocates "struggle against institutions" in the name of freedom as necessary concrete political action in certain circumstances. ROLF AHLERS, *"The Overcoming of Critical Theory in the Hegelian Unity of Theory and Praxis."* Attempts to demonstrate the "inaccuracy" of Marx's view of Hegel and to show that both right- and left-wing criticisms of Hegel are off the mark. IH

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENCE, No. 9 (Spring 1979)

Dorrwar Bookstore, 22 Thayer Street, Providence, RI 02906. $5 for 4 issues. A special issue, "Sex Roles and Humor," begins with a look at feminist humor and includes interviews of women comic artists such as Trina Robbins, Chin Lyvely, Sharon Kahn Rudahl, A. Kaminsky, Melinda Gebbie, T. Richards, Lee Marrs and Roberta Gregory. Two poets of the 1930s, Martin Birnbaum and Thomas McGrath; and Maurice Kish, a painter and poet, are also interviewed. Selections from Oscar Ameringer, an early American socialist humorist, round out this special issue. Also includes a symposium on television. PFM

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DIALECTICAL ANTHROPOLOGY, 4:2 (July 1979)

Elsevier Scientific Publishing Co., Journal Division, P.O. Box 211, 1000 AE Amsterdam, Netherlands. MAHFOUD BENNOUNE, *"Primary Capital Accumulation in Colonial Tunisia."* Using Rosa Luxemburg's theory, Bennoune argues that the salient contradiction of modern capitalist colonialism is the schism between the settler's desire to maintain non-capitalist structure and mode of production while, at the same time, demanding that the needs of primary capital accumulation be met. MARIBETH DURST, *"The Dialectics of Socialization: A Tentative Formulation."* By using the anthropological method of emic analysis, Durst argues that children form conceptual categories antithetical to adult categories and that conventional (non-dialectical) educational methods deny the child the freedom to create new categories, and only allow the child to replicate formalized adult conceptual categories. THOMAS R. MOORE, *"SIL and a 'Newfound' Tribe: The Amarakaeri Experience."* An account of the Wycliffe Bible Translator-Summer Institute of Linguistics' role as agent of ethnocide among a primitive South American tribe, the Amarakaeri. THOMAS J. MALONEY *"Appropriate Technology and Costa Rican Sugar."* A discussion of the results of capital intensive technology on the sugar industry in Costa Rica. BEN AGGER, *"The Growing Relevance of Marcuse's Dialectic of Individual and Class."* An attempt to save Marcuse from aesthetic resignation by way of Piccone's theory of artificial negativity. JOSEPH R. LLOBERA, *"Newton, the Scientific Method, and Social Thought in the Enlightenment."* U.M. BODEMANN, *"The Fulfillment of Fieldwork in Marxist Praxis."* An account of Marxist praxis that nearly protrays Marx and Engels as social fieldworkers. VERNON KOBRINSKY, essay review, *"The Mouths of Earth: The Dialectical Allegories of the Kwakiutl Indians."* DW

ECONOMY AND SOCIETY, 8:3 (August 1979)

Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 9 Park Street, Boston, MA 02108. BEN FINE, *"On Marx's Theory of Agricultural Rent."* Clarifies the connection between Marx's theory of agricultural rent and his theory of capital at the level of distribution. The forms of differential and absolute rent are shown to correspond to the formation of market value and price of production in the agricultural sector, which in turn depends on the barriers posed by landed property to intensive and extensive cultivation. COLIN MACCABE, *"On Discourse."* Contributes to a theory of the relations between intersubjectivity and language by investigating the term 'discourse' in the works of Emile Benveniste and Zellig Harris. Harris' work is criticized as banal empiricism, analyzing discourse independently of subjective interpretation and without a theory of institutions or ideology. The final section of the article presents the possibilities and problems of Michel Pecheux's attempt to elaborate Harris' work in relation to Althusser's theory of ideology. ANTHONY CUTLER, BARRY HINDESS, PAUL HIRST and ATLAR HUSSIAN, *"Debate: An Imaginary Orthodoxy — A Reply to Laurence Harris."* A response to Harris' review of *Marx's Capital and Capitalism Today.* The authors refer to Harris as a guardian of Marxism and charge that he does not understand their argument. They "challenge the necessity of regarding societies either as totalities determined in the last instance by the economic level or as totalities at all." LAURENCE HARRIS, *"Debate: The Theory of Value and the Value of Theory — A Reply to Cutler* et al." Harris claims that his critics view all economic and social theory, including *Capital,* as based on epistemology and argues that *Capital* cannot be seen as a unitary whole. Review article by JIM TOMLINSON, *"State Policy and the Poor."* Reviews J. Harris, *William Beveridge: A Biography.* Review article by JOHN SCOTT, *"Financial Control."* Reviews David M. Kotz, *Bank Control of Large Corporations in the United States.* HP

IDEOLOGY AND CONSCIOUSNESS, No. 5 (Spring 1979)

1 Woburn Mansions, Torrington Place, London WC1, England. Distributed in the U.S. by Humanities Press, Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716. NIKOLAS ROSE, *"The Psychological Complex: Mental Measurement and Social Administration."* A genealogical inquiry into the relations of knowledge and power that examines early 20th-century questions of mental deficiency and eugenics (the concept of "the feeble-minded") and their relation to policies of mental measurement (IQ). JACQUES DONZELOT, *"The Poverty of Political Culture."* The perspective of Foucault's recent analyses of power is used to criticize two tendencies of leftist thought: French "new political culture" concerned with defending socialism, and apologies for German-Italian anti-parliamentary terrorism. JILL HODGES and ATHAR HUSSAIN, *"La Police des Familles."* Extensive, critical review of Donzelot's book of the same title. GRAHAM BURCHELL, *"A Note on Juvenile Justice."* Applies Donzelot's concept of the wardship complex to a discussion of juvenile court proceedings. ROGER WOODS, *"Review: Terence Hawkes, 'Structuralism and Semiotics.'"* GR

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LANGUAGE, Nos. 9-10 (October 1979)

Charles Bernstein, 464 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10024. $4 for 3 issues. Issue theme: The Politics of Poetry. BRUCE ANDREWS, *"Writing, Social Work and Political Practice."* Both the descriptive and the structuralist systems of conceptualizing writing ignore its constitutive practice. Its object should be "to politicize — not a closure but an opening." In spite of his critique of structuralism, Andrews' conclusion is close to the late structuralist texts of Derrida and Barthes. BRUCE BOONE, *"Writing, Power and Activity."* To the degree that new utopian forces are making themselves felt politically, writing must reassess its abdication of power. CHARLES BERNSTEIN, *"The Dollar Value of Poetry."* Poetry's radical cutting edge lies in its refusal to give itself to the service of capitalism (to give itself a dollar value) by being "untranslatable." JOHN LEO, *"Capital-Writing."* Recent projects in French Criticism (Marin, Debord, Deleuze and Guattari, Lyotard, Kristeva) "share an urgency, a sense of unease, coming out of that process we call writing which, in its tensions and reflexivity, generates its metacritical possibility with regard to what it embodies or authorizes: power, ideology." Plus others. PM

THE PHILOSOPHICAL FORUM, 9:23

P.O. Box 247, Boston University Station, Boston, MA 02215. CORNEL WEST, *"Philosophy and the Afro-American Experience."* Argues that philosophical conceptions can contribute to a fuller understanding of the Afro-American experience. WILLIAM R. JONES, *"The Legitimacy and Necessity of Black Philosophy: Some Preliminary Considerations."* Though there exists philosophy of a non-ethnic nature, it is still in the interest of black philosophy to develop its identity. JESSE N. McDADE, *"Towards an Ontology of Negritude."* Describes philosophical issues that make a "black perspective" possible. L. KEITA, *"African Philosophical Systems — A Rational Reconstruction."* An examination of the contributions made by Africans in the area of philosophical thought. ERLING SKORPEN, *"Is There a Western Philosopical Model for Black Experience?"* RICHARD H. POPKIN, *"Hume's Racism."* Argues that Hume presents the theoretical basis for racism. I.A. MENKITI, *"The Resentment of Injustice: Some Conequences of Institutional Racism."* Argues that a class of actors is not fit candidates for the ascription of moral responsibility because they are burdened with an affective impairment brought about by social defeat of their self-worth as persons. HOWARD McGARY JR., *"Justice and Reparation."* Defends the thesis that it is just reparation to afford preferential treatment to blacks who were victims of institutional injustice. DIANA AXELSEN, *"With All Deliberate Delay: On Justifying Preferential Policies in Education and Employment."* More on reparations. JOYCE MITCHEL COOK, *"On the Nature and Nurture of Intelligence."* On the interpretation of findings from IQ tests. LARRY L. THOMAS, *"Rawlsian Self-Respect and the Black Consciousness Movement."* Argues that Rawls' analysis of self-respect is defective because he fails to distinguish between self-respect and self-esteem. RICHARD C. ONWUNAIBE, *"Frantz Fanon: A Sign of Reconciliation."* Fanon is fundamentally a sign of reconciliation, and the 'contradiction' in his complex character was more apparent than real. BERNARD R. BOXILL, *"Dubois and Fanon on Culture."* The ideas of culture present in the works of Dubois and Fanon support development of the black artist. ROBERT E. BIRT, *"An Examination of James Cone's Concept of God and its Role in Black Liberation."* A critique of "A Black Theology of Liberation." GREGORY RIGSBY, *"Space-Time Concepts in Black Literature."* The black man's peculiar angle of vision and relationship with the outside world is manifest in his space-time sense, Rigsby maintains, which is reflected in black literature. JOSEPH BOSKIN, *"The Complicity of Humor: The Life and Death of Sambo."* Samboism is viewed as having maintained social distance and racial superiority. JLS

THE PHILOSOPHICAL FORUM, 9:4

DAVID CARRIER, *"Imagination and our Image of the Mind: A Note."* JAY NEWMAN, *"The Unconscious Origin of Philosophical Inquiry."* Criticizes the writings of Herzberg, Lazerowitz, Wisdom and Collingwood for proposing that the main origins of philosophical inquiry are "in the unconscious." ROBERT C. SOLOMON, *"The Secret of Hegel (Kierkegaard's Complaint): A Study in Hegel's Philosophy of Religion."* Argues that the well-kept secret of Hegel is that he was an atheist. R.L. ZIMMERMAN, *"Kierkegaard's Immanent Critique of Hegel."* Attempts to assess Kierkegaard's critique of Hegel in parts of the "Philosophical Fragments." ROGER S. GOTTLIEB, *"A Critique of Kierkegaard's Doctrine of Subjectivity."* JLS

PHILOSOPHY TODAY, 23:3-4 (Fall 1979)

Messenger Press, Celina, OH 45822. $9 per year (4 issues). HUGH J. SILVERMAN, *"For a Hermeneutic Semiology of the Self."* An attempt to understand the 'self' as a system of signs

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whose existence is fundamentally 'an interpretive act.' Claims that hermeneutics is essentially a demand for and a recovery of the self, not the text. JOHN D. CAPUTO, *"Transcendence and the Transcendental in Husserl's Phenomenology."* A Heideggerian reading of Husserl that distinguishes the transcendent from the transcendental, so that the former is merely that which transcends consciousness, whereas the latter transcends the world. A Christian reading of Husserl is lurking behind this projection. CHARLES J. DOUGHERTY, *"The Significance of Husserl's Logical Investigations."* Husserl's early project is depicted as a critique of psychologism and of empiricism. DOROTHY LELAND, *"Edmund Husserl: Phenomenology and the Crisis of Language."* The limits of Husserlian phenomenology gave way to the developments of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty regarding the problem of mediated meaning. In this analysis the transcendental ego has been displaced in contemporary phenomenology and replaced by the problem of language. EDWARD VACEK, *"Max Scheler's Anthropology."* An examination of Scheler's five-fold conception of man as the basis of his ethics and philosophical anthropology. The conclusion is that 'man' is essentially a composite of spirit and urge that cooperates with God. A.R. LUTHER, *"Scheler's Order of Evidence and Metaphysical Experiencing."* Analyzes Scheler's notion of experience in order to fill in Heidegger's notion of Being-in-the-world. A problematic formulation of the ground of being as the 'Holy' — an abyss to fill another abyss. PETER H. SOADER, *"The Facts of Max Scheler."* A critique of Heath's reading of Scheler in an attempt to substitute Merleau-Ponty for Husserl as the former's paternity figure. Abandons the meaning of a priori in order to demonstrate that for Scheler this could be based upon experience alone.RONALD L. HALL, *"Wittgenstein and Polanyi: The Problem of Privileged Self-Knowledge."* The similarity between Wittgenstein and Polanyi is emphasized here with respect to their critiques of positivism and their mutual attempts to 'recover the person as the ultimate locus of sense and meaning.' STEPHAN A. DINAN, *"Spontaneity and Perception in Sartre's Theory of the Body."* An examination of a potential contradiction in Sartre regarding the independent for-itself of consciousness and its evident dependence on the body. IH

POLITICAL THEORY, 7:2 (May 1979)

Sage Publications, 275 South Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90212. $15 for 4 issues. This issue contains a mini-symposium organized by Robert Cumming on the political and social thought of Sartre. THOMAS R. FLYNN, *"L'Imagination au Pouvoir: The Evolution of Sartre's Political and Social Thought."* Maintains that Sartre's project remained the same throughout his career. In a chronological treatment of Sartre's work, Flynn focuses on the concepts of "objective possibility," the primacy of "praxis," the "mediating third party," and "mediated reciprocity" as the essence of the Marxist existentialism of Sartre's mature political and social thought. ROBERT DENOON CUMMING, *"This Place of Violence, Obscurity, and Witchcraft."* "Throughout his career and before his dialectic ever became 'Marxist,' Sartre employed a dialectical method," Cumming says. He identifies nine traits of Sartre's existential dialectic and emphasizes its phenomenological, reflexive, affective bases in comparison with the mechanistic materialism of Soviet Marxism. JAMES SCHMIDT, *"Lordship and Bondage in Merleau-Ponty and Sartre."* Starting with a critical evaluation of Kojève's interpretation of Hegel's Master-Slave metaphor, Schmidt traces the use of this metaphor in the works of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. This metaphor reveals the essential differences between Sartre and Merleau-Ponty on such central issues as the relationship of ontology and social relations, including the gap between theory and practice, consciousness and intersubjectivity, as well as concrete political concerns. ROBERT AMDUR, *"Compensatory Justice: The Question of Costs."* A public policy piece that adumbrates three principles of compensatory justice within a bureaucratically inspired framework. NANCY L. SCHWARTZ, *"Distinction between Public and Private Life: Marx on the 'Zoon Politikon.'"* Concentrating on the *Grundrisse*, Schwartz challenges the accuracy of translations of key concepts in passages dealing with the public-private dichotomy. Her analysis ignores Habermas and does injustice to Arendt in failing to recognize that the current "public" sphere is simply the private sphere masquerading as the public in the disguise of the state. In spite of this, Schwartz rightly concludes that Marx probably did not wish to see the complete abolition of the private as long as subordination to the public sphere, which is to say, political freedom, was secured. GEORGE NAKHIKIAN, *"Eudaimonism Revisited."* Extended discussion of Terence Irwin's *Plato's Moral Theory*, in which Nakhnikian takes issue with Irwin's contentions that Plato did not present a single moral theory and that the fully articulated theory contains an antinomy that Plato could not resolve. Plus reviews. RJ

POLITICS AND SOCIETY, 8:3-4 (1978)

Geron-X Inc., Box 1108, Los Altos, CA 94022. $9.50 for 4 issues. MICHAEL BURAWOY,

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"Toward a Marxist Theory of the Labor Process: Braverman and Beyond." Argues that the essence of capitalist control can only be understood through comparison with a non-capitalist mode of production. Braverman's theoretical framework is examined to show that an understanding of capitalist control cannot be reached without due attention to the "subjective" components of work. Braverman is criticized for attributing neutrality to machinery and technology. DIETER GROH, *"Intensification of Work and Industrial Conflict in Germany, 1896-1914."* Disputes the prevailing 'conspiracy' explanation of the spread of reformism in the trade-union movement before 1914, and stresses the material conditions under which reformist policies could spread. In this context the relative impotence of the unions is evident, for they were no longer in a position to achieve real improvements for the workers at the distributive level in 1905. DAVID F. NOBLE, *"Social Change in Machine Design: The Case of Automatically Controlled Machine Tools, and a Challenge for Labor."* Identifies three important challenges for labor: it must transcend the ideology of technological determinism by demystifying technology itself, regain its confidence by preparing itself to articulate its own choices in its own class interest, and struggle to get into the position of making these choices and thereby steering the course of "progress" in a more human direction. MARGOT B. STEIN, *"The Meaning of Skill: The Case of the French Engine-Drivers, 1837-1917."* Explores the causes of the attitudinal shift from "corporate or craft to industrial or intercraft consciousness" among railroad workers in the Syndicate National Strike of October 1910. Recognizing key factors encouraging craft particularism and industrial solidarity, Noble raises two questions: why it took so long to achieve unity and why unity occurred at all? RANDY HODSON, *"Labor in the Monopoly, Competitive and State Factors of Production."* A study of the structure of capital and its differentiated productive sectors, which are classified in terms of the concentration and centralization of capital. The conditions of employment in these various sectors are analyzed, with the major theme being the inequality of job conditions. HARLEY L. BROWNING and JOACHIM SINGELMANN, *"The Transformation of the American Labor Force: The Interaction of Industry and Occupation."* PFM

PRAXIS, No. 4 (1978)

P.O. Box 207, Goleta, CA 93017. $7 for 2 issues. LOUIS ARAGON, *"John Heartfield and Revolutionary Beauty."* A 1935 discussion of Heartfield's work in the context of interwar avant-garde movements, focusing on his merging of the poetic and social "forbidden" in collage. Followed by six photomontages. KENNETH COUTTS-SMITH, *"The Political Art of Klaus Staeck."* Photomontage demonstrates resistance to identity and commercial cooptation by which bourgeois culture appropriates and subsumes the political in visual art. Berlin dada, 1930s agitprop, and the confrontation polit-art of the late 1960s illustrate how brief such moments are. In contrast, Staeck moves beyond such avant-garde approaches to the art "object" in distribution as well as production, creating mass political visual art. Followed by 66 posters and commentary. *"The Image as Weapon: An Interview with Christer Themptander."* On political photomontage. Followed by 11 posters, with notes. STEFAN MORAWSKI, *"Historicism and the Philosophy of Art."* On the importance of the philosophy of social history of art (historicism is defined differently from the pejorative use given the term by Kosik and others). Morawski analyzes praxis and materialism, social development of human nature and culture, class conflicts, dialectics of progress and regress, the historical project of human creativity, and the socio-historical location of values. THOMAS McGRATH, *"Some Notes on Walter Lowenfels."* Brief discussion followed by nine poems. WALTER LOWENFELS, *"The Ax is My Watermark."* WALTER LOWENFELS, *"The Impossible Goal."* ALBERTO ASOR ROSA, *"Gramsci on Italian Cultural History."* Gramsci's reaction to utopian democratic idealists led him to emphasize the instrumental function of intellectuals and the importance of the particularity of the (conservative) masses, and to favor consensus over rupture. ROBERT SAYRE, *"Goldmann and Modern Realism: Introduction to the 'Balcony' Article."* Goldmann's first article on Genet is seen as the turning point in his work, marking a shift from concerns with classical to contemporary culture. By claiming that Genet's plays reflect the vision of leftist intelligentsia, Goldmann shows how modernist works perform the same function as realism, in spite of Lukacs' opposition on this point. LUCIEN GOLDMANN, *"Genet's 'The Balcony': A Realist Play."* A 1960 interpretation of the play as critical realism, a literary representation of social transformations. MARC FERRO, *" 'La Grande Illusion': Its Divergent Receptions in Europe."* French and German reception of the film in 1937 is contrasted with that of the 1946 re-release. Praised by the left and banned by the Nazis the first time, it was condemned as collaborationist by the resistance the second time. An examination of the film's latent content reveals its ambiguous presentation of Jews. STEFAN HEYM, *"The Indifferent Man."* Allegorical treatment of the compromises made by the

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Hungarian Communist intelligentsia. MARC ZIMMERMAN, *"Exchange and Production: Structuralist and Marxist Approaches to Literary Theory."* A brief survey of structuralism's usefulness as a supplement to Marxism. Discusses the major structuralists and the movement from signs to literary systems in Saussure, Levi-Strauss, Barthes and Jakobsen, where the problem is the gap between the formal model of the sign system and the dynamism of the historical referent. Then discusses the structural historicism of Braudel and Wallerstein and Tel Quel, which looks at history as a signifying system. GREGORY RENAULT, *"Over the Rainbow: Dialectic and Ideology in 'The Wizard of Oz.'"* An immanent and transcendent critique of "The Wizard of Oz," seen as an example of the serious political meaning and dialectical ambiguity of mass culture. Internally, the dialectical structure of the film (Kansas-Oz-Kansas) parallels the theme, a critique of reified instrumental action. Externally, the film's response to reification takes the form of the reassertion of the private sphere, and thus avoids coming to terms with the social sources of alienation. ARIEL DORFMAN, *"The Invisible Chile: Three Years of Cultural Resistance."* Spontaneous popular cultural responses to the dictatorship indicate that resistance to the junta still exists. WILLIAM HARTLEY, *" 'Lambras': A Vision of Hell in the Third World."* Romano Costa's novel as microcosm of the four aspects of Latin American reality. ANDREW TURNER, *"Selections from 'Ballads Moribundus.'"* Five political drawings. JAMES GOODWIN, *"The Object(ive)s of Cinema: Vertov (Factography) and Eisenstein (Ideography)."* Political film directors have contrasting views, Vertov offering a text of the world, Eisenstein a hermeneutics of that text. DAVID CRAVEN, *"Towards a Newer Virtil: Mondrean De-mythologized."* HANS NAMUTH, GEORG REISNER, *"The Spanish Civil War: A Portrait in Verse, with Photographs."* ALAN W. BARNETT, *"José Hernandez Delgadillo: The New Art of the Mexican Revolution."* On the production, form and theme of Delgadillo's public murals, with eight illustrations. HEINZ BRUEGGEMANN, *"Bertolt Brecht and Karl Korsch: Questions of Living and Dead Elements within Marxism."* The role of Korsch in Brecht's critical anti-Leninist Marxism is discussed. RICHARD ALBRECHT, MATTHIAS MITZSCHKE, *"Bertolt Brecht, 'Bolshevik Without a Party Book' or Petit-Bourgeois Intellectual?"* An orthodox Leninist critique of the position on Korsch and Brecht taken in the previous article. Infantile left-wing interpretations of Brecht use the "Korsch Legend" to reduce him to a petty-bourgeois anti-Leninist, when his critiques of Korsch and the Frankfurt School indicate that Brecht was a "consistent and independent" Leninist. G.L. ULMEN *"Aesthetics in a 'Disenchanted World.'"* An extensive review of Hans-Dietrich Sander, *Marxistische Ideologie and allgemeine Kunsttheorie.* Plus additional reviews, notes and discussions, and a wealth of political poetry. GR

RADICAL AMERICA, 13:3 (May-June 1979)

P.O. Box B.N., Cambridge, MA 02104. $8 for 4 issues. ANDRE GORZ, *"Nuclear Energy and the Logic of Tools."* Though written more than four years ago, this article anticipates many of the problems of nuclear energy raised by the accident at Three Mile Island. Gorz identifies the dangers of accidents and radioactive waste, and also of military and policing developments that accompany the growth of nuclear power. DAVID WIDGERY, *"Sylvia Pankhurst."* Focuses on one of the first socialist feminists to organize working-class women. Her opposition to the single-issue strategy of the suffrage movement, her anti-imperialist opposition to World War I, and her defense of Ethiopia against the Italian fascist invasion and occupation are discussed at length. ROBERT COHEN, *"Mr. Norris"* and *"Sylvia Cohen."* Two poems. ERVAND ABRAHAMIAN, *"Political Forces in the Iranian Revolution."* Surveys the emergence, since the shah's departure, of numerous political organizations, each with its own ideology, social base, and vision of the future. Assesses their relative strengths in the three separate power centers that have appeared in Iran since the revolution: the cabinet heading the state bureaucracy, the Komitehs heading the religious militias, and the workers' councils set up in many factories and government offices. PFM

SALMAGUNDI, No. 46 (Fall 1979)

Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. $6 for 4 issues. Special issue on Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism.* MICHAEL FISCHER, *"Criticizing Capitalist America."* In an uncritical summary, Fischer argues that "Lasch's most striking contention is that these narcissistic tendencies do not contradict American capitalism...but reflect what it has become." Bureaucratization undermines traditional values of loyalty, replacing them with a decentered image of success. LARRY D. NACHMAN, *"The Solitude of the Heart: Personality and Democratic Culture."* Lasch's opposition of the stable, traditional society to the modern democratic one displaces consideration of the arbitrariness of authority. This ignores the most dangerous vicissitude of the personality type he depicts: the tendency of the narcissistic ego to issue into

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totalitarian communities that provide the strong super-ego of the leader. JANICE DOANE, DEVON LEIGH HODGES, *"Mobilizing the Ranks of Reality."* Lasch's nostalgia implies that his narrative uses a central device of realism: the displacement of objective truth by illusion. He, therefore, valorizes the mimesis of realist fiction and elides the critical cutting edge of the fractured narrative forms of modernist texts. Lacan's "mirror stage" underscores the centrality of mimesis in shaping the narcissistic ego. CHRISTOPHER LASCH, *"Politics and Social Theory: A Reply to the Critics."* Lasch defends his work as one rooted in the tradition of critical theory: it is not a simple attack on modernism, nor "selfishness or the pursuit of gain but against capitalism itself." Plus poetry by Robert Penn Warren and others, short fiction, and a selection of letters between Andre Gide and Dorothy Bussy. PM

SCIENCE AND SOCIETY, 42:3 (Fall 1979)

Room 4331, John Jay College, CUNY, 445 West 59th Street, New York, NY 10019. $10 for 4 issues; single copies $2.50. JOHN WEEKS, *"The Process of Accumulation and the 'Profit-Squeeze' Hypothesis."* A critique of the hypothesis of "profit-squeeze" in connection with accumulation and crisis, and related complex processes. ANEVAR SHAIKH, *"Foreign Trade and the Law of Value: Part I."* An extension of Marx's law of value to the question of foreign trade and a critique of theories of unequal exchange. E.K. HUNT, *"The Categories of Productive and Unproductive Labor in Marxist Economic Theory."* A discussion of differentiation made between productive and unproductive labor presently attributed to Marx and a critique of Marx's writing on the subject with suggestions for alternative uses of these categorical terms. LUDO CUYVERS, *"Joan Robinson's Theory of Economic Growth."* The author presents a comparison of Joan Robinson's theory of economic growth with the work of Marx, denoting her work as essentially neo-Marxist in the post-Keynesian sense. This is a contribution to the Marxist debate on the theory of accumulation. Review article by MICHAEL A. LEBOWITZ, *"Heller on Marx's Concept of Needs."* Plus book reviews. RS

SCREEN, 20:2 (Summer 1979)

29 Old Compton Street, London W1U 5PL. $18 for 4 issues. PAUL ABBOTT, *"Authority."* Criticizes one-dimensional theories of power in the work of Althusser and Reich. A genuinely critical psychoanalytic intervention must be "founded on a refusal to accept the conscious as the essence of the psychical." RAYMOND BELLOUR, *"Cine-Repetitions."* A summary of repetition in film. External repetition involves the fixing of object representation in film. Internal repetition refers to the mechanical repetition in the body of the film (frames) and alternation (shot-reverse-shot exchanges). PETER GIDAL, *"The Anti-Narrative."* Gidal argues for a moment of identification that is also an establishment of illusionism in order to supersede a simplistic attack on the reproduction of the 'real.' Plus afterword by Stephen Heath which argues that Gidal's concept of 'meaninglessness' or 'illusionism' has much in common with the deconstructivist theories he attacks. Plus FELIX THOMPSON, *"Review of* Trapline *and Syntax."* PM

SCREEN EDUCATION, 31 (Summer 1979)

29 Old Compton Street, London W1U 5PL England. $10 for 4 issues. *Screen Education* plus *Screen* $22 for 4 issues. RAYMOND WILLIAMS, *"Television and Teaching."* Interview on the problems of left intervention in the area of broadcasting, with particular reference to Williams' course on television police fiction. UMBERTO ECO, *"Can Television Teach?"* The message of television is endowed with meanings by the sender but is received as an empty expression to be mediated by the codes and sub-codes of the addressees. MANUEL ALVARADO, *"Teaching Television."* Review of *Teaching Television in the School and College Curriculum.* JOHN O. THOMPSON, *"Up Aporia Creek."* A critique of Jameson's afterword in *Aesthetics and Politics.* The presentation of the modernist-realist debate implies a search for a text which produces progressive effects. Such a search is doomed because on a political level texts operate only as "elements of cultural formations of great heterogeneity." JENNY TAYLOR, DAVID LAING, *"Disco-Pleasure-Discourse: On 'Rock and Sexuality.'"* Analysis of music must take into account the contradiction between verbal message and attendant emotion. GRISELDA POLLOCK, *"Three Perspectives on Photography."* An analysis of the repressive contextualization of a photographic exhibition at the Hayward Gallery. JIM GREALY, *"The Media's War in Ireland."* Although the nominal coverage on Ireland has increased, it focuses on the recounting of incidents; genuine investigative journalism has declined or has actually been suppressed. RICHARD COLLINS, *"Panic among the Baked Beans."* Review of the Institute for Workers' Control Conference on Mass Media and Accountability. CARL GARDNER, MARGARET HENRY, *"Racism, Anti-racism and Access Television: The Making of 'Open Door.'"* The Open

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Door program by the Campaign against Racism in the Media may have the effect of closing BBC input into programs critical of it. Yet the program lacked a theoretical analysis of racism. ALAN HORROX, *"Our People."* DENIS MacSHANE, *"Reporting Race."* Two short accounts of the presentation of racism in the British media. PM

THEORY AND SOCIETY, 8:1 (July 1979)

Elsevier Scientific Publishing Co., 52 Vanderbilt Ave., New York, NY 10017. $23 per year. ALEX DUPUY, BARRY TRUCHILL, *"Problems in the Theory of State Capitalism."* The authors criticize the use of the concept of state capitalism since they find little support of a basic change in capitalism nor evidence of a state-controlled market. They suggest the concept should be used as an analytic category and not as a concept describing reality. ROD AYA, *"Theories of Revolution Reconsidered: Contrasting Models of Collective Violence."* An examination of some problems with theories of revolutions. Aya sees revolutions as violent struggles for state power and therefore as basic political processes. He rejects any focus on states of mind, nor does he accept theories using natural disasters as models. GORDON BURNSIDE, *"The Winter Poet, An Interview with William H. Gass."* An interesting semi-biographical piece about Gass and the author's infatuation with Gass' work. However, the interview only hints at the politics and theory contained in Gass' work. ELLEN KAY TRIMBERGER, *"World Systems Analysis: The Problem of Unequal Development."* A review of Samir Amin's *Unequal Opportunity*, Michael Hechter's *Internal Colonialism*, and Daniel Chirot's *Social Change in a Peripheral Society*. Trimberger uses these three books to provide a historical examination of two models of world systems theories, and argues that the model of uneven development of productive relations is more empirically accurate than the model of unequal exchange. All three books are recommended for anyone interested in historical sociology. IRENE L. GENDZIER, *"Modernity and Development."* A discussion of Alex Inkeles and David H. Smith's *Becoming Modern*. Gendzier considers the book unsuccessful for its isolation of the individual from society, its lack of historical consideration, its abuse of modernization theory, and its failure to explain social change. Little is found to recommend the book. RER

WOMEN'S STUDIES INTERNATIONAL QUARTERLY, 2:1 (1979)

Pergamon Press, Maxwell House, Fairview Park, Elmsford, NY 10523. MARY HOWELL, *"Can We Be Feminists and Professionals?"* Socialization as professionals currently tends to produce discrepancies between feminist values and "appropriate" professional values, e.g., elitism and appropriateness of control over others. GLYNIS M. BREAKWELL, *"Woman: Group and Identity?"* Examines current social psychological analyses of the women's movement. JANET SAYERS, *"Anatomy is Destiny: Variations on a Theme."* Freud's work on female psychology and feminist critiques of it are outlined; Horney, Irigaray, Mitchell, Coward and de Beauvoir's views are examined. Contends that Freud's work is still important. JANE LEWIS, *"The Ideology and Politics of Birth Control in Inter-War England."* Widespread birth control was granted social recognition and support only when needed to get more women into the workforce (in part because of a declining working-class birth rate). HELEN ROBERTS, *"Women, Social Class and IUD Use."* On the sexist and unreliable nature of social class data when assessed by male partner's occupation, specifically in health service policy research. MARYAN BEAMS, *"One Woman's Work is Another Woman's Daughter: A Contribution to the Sociology of Childbirth."* The two critical aspects of childbirth, medical work and personal experience, must *both* be sustained; the predominant medical mode is characterized by depersonalization and woman's lack of control. SUSAN C. WOOLEY, ORLAND W. WOOLEY, *"Obesity and Women—I. A Closer Look at the Facts."* Obesity is generally *not* self-induced, and, in fact, "the major *treatment* for obesity may also be the major *cause* of obesity." ORLAND W. WOOLEY, SUSAN C. WOOLEY, SUE R. DYRENFORTH, *"Obesity and Women—II. A Neglected Feminist Topic."* American women may be mutilated by social pressures to be thin as surely as Chinese women were mutiliated by foot-binding. MARILYN LAWRENCE, *"Anorexia Nervosa — The Control Paradox."* "Anorexics are attempting to solve the problem of their own powerlessness and denigration as women by engaging in an internal struggle for self-control. The struggle takes the form of an effort to transcend the body which debases them, and to achieve self-respect through self-denial." HANNA-BEATE SCHOEPP-SCHILLING, *"Women's Studies, Women's Research and Women's Research Centers: Recent Developments in the USA and in West Germany."* MARY ANN ELSTON, *"Reclaiming our Bodies: Health Handbooks by and for Women."* Reviews British women's health handbooks. Plus book and film reviews. GN

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WORKING PAPERS COLLECTION, 1

Feral Publications, Box 83, Wentworth Building, Sydney University, Sydney 2006, Australia. $5.50 Australian per issue. This is a timely publication, edited by Meaghan Morris and Paul Patton, on *Michel Foucault: Power, Truth, Strategy.* FRANCOIS CHATELET, *"Recit."* Chatelet, a leading French historian, presents a narrative that retraces the path of "the intellectuals," discussing Marxism explicitly, in the context of post-World War II France. The interview by A. FONTANO, and P. PASQUINO, *"Truth and Power,"* is included. Here Foucault discusses his distinction between the specific intellectual and the universal intellectual. "The 'universal' intellectual derives from the jurist-notable and finds his fullest expression in the writer.... The 'specific' intellectual derives from quite another figure, not the 'jurist-notable' but the 'savant-expert." Theorization of writing, as it occurred in the 1960s, shows that "the activity of the writer was no longer the active center." REVOLTES LOGIQUE COLLECTIVE, *"Powers and Strategies."* An interview. *"Power and Norm: Notes."* The text of class notes taken from a series of lectures presented by Foucault, where he discusses historical transformations in the relation of *habit* to *contract.* An *"Interview with Lucette Finas"* expounds on the interchangeability of the conceptions *will to knowledge* and *will to truth* in *The History of Sexuality: Volume I.* In this section Foucault extends his critique of the *writer as universalist intellectual* and binds this to a conception of archaeology as a politicization that escapes the juridical mediation of power. Similarly, *"The Life of Infamous Men"* sketches Foucault's position on confession along this same line. "At the time when an apparatus is placed in position for forcing the telling of the 'lowly,' of that which does not tell itself, of that which merits no glory, the 'infamous' therefore, a new imperative takes shape which acts to constitute what one might call the ethic immanent to the literary discourse of the West.... A kind of injunction to flush out the most nocturnal and the most everyday aspect of existence...acts to draw what is the line of literature's tendency since the 17th century.... More than a specific form,...it is this constraint ...which characterized it...: the duty to tell the most common of secrets." Part I of *Michel Foucault* ends with the most extensive bibliography of work on the topic of Foucault in English. Part II of *Michel Foucault* is composed of three original essays. PAUL PATTON, *"Of Power and Prisons."* MEAGHAN MORRIS, *"The Pirate's Fiancée."* PAUL FOSS, *"The Lottery of Life."* Patton provides an example of how Foucault's concept of *specific intellectual* is applied. The Groupe d'Information sur les Prisons was organized by Foucault and others in February 1971 to provide militant prisoners with public contact through the mass media. "A particular, local attack on the social regime of truth which served to disrupt, for a time, the State apparatus of punishment." Patton pinpoints the transformation of Foucault's thought following *Les Mots et les Choses* in the context of a changing conception of power. Morris' essay sifts through Foucault's thought for some clue as to the development of a feminist writing, and hence to a theory of the subject. This is pursued via Lacan and semiotics. Foss takes up Foucault's observations on writing and transposes this to the decline of the fable and the rise of the novel, i.e., the movement in literature from *mimesis* to *diegesis.* Paralleling Foucault's discussion of sex, Foss notes that for this transition to occur "man had to pass everything to do with everyday life through the endless mill of speech. In this regime of power-knowledge, nothing was too minute or scandalous to show or tell." LRI

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